

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns in a dark blue color, framing the central text.

Ch 1-36 Dragon Life

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Dragon Life Chapter 1

Chapter 01 – I used to be human. I’ve forgotten my name.

I wonder what all of you imagine when you hear the word “Dragon”.

Four limbs with a horn grown from the head, a long serpent like body, a notched long tail, bat like wings, sharp claws and fangs and a fiery breath. Isn’t that the usual image?

I’m the same. When I imagine a dragon, I immediately think of those appearing in current games or fiction.

At times they kidnap frail maidens becoming evil, at other times they accompany the hero, striving to vanquish evil. There are also those where in legends they create the heaven and earth, mating with humans, leaving their seed.

But right now, we know that things like dragons don’t exist.

In the Mesozoic Era’s jurassic Cretaceous period, during which dinosaurs rampaged, similar beings might have been alive, but among those there probably weren’t any that breathed fire.

When mankind was undeveloped there were biologists who thought that dragons existed, but nowadays almost everyone knows that dragons are nothing but myth and dreams.

In the first place, the concept of dragons are sort of the most fantasy-like thing there is, and appear in all kinds of stories as a symbol of something we wish existed, is what I think.

I might have digressed slightly with that talk, but anyway, my conclusion is but one.

That the beings known as “dragons” don’t exist.

Using selective breeding, we might one day create similar beings, but the dragons we fantasize about certainly don’t exist.

However, however! Something that destroys that logic has happened.

Just what the heck happened.

It took me a while to realize the abnormal event.

How long, you ask? It wasn’t until after I ate a young, delicious village girl.

She was not a noble, just a village girl, but she sure had an abundant amount of magical energy, especially of the spirit of earth that I particularly like, so she was quite the delicacy. Content, I burped.

———No, no, wait a moment. It’s not a matter of deliciousness.

However, what I ate a moment ago was without question the same species as me, a human. Her frightened expression while she screamed, the taste of her flesh and blood in my mouth. And the near ecstasy as the abundant magical power overflowed within me, the cause of my to desire to “eat”. It was truly delicious. I licked the stuck blood around my mouth with my long tongue. The human I ate this time was truly the most delicious human I’ve ever eaten———wait!?

Something is definitely wrong!! I don’t eat humans! I don’t have any memories of that at all! So far in my life as a human I’ve never eaten a human, nor do I have such cannibalistic hobbies! Such things are enough if they appear in films and such!!

———Yes... But it was truly deviously delish... Huh?

The more I think about it, the more my thoughts turn to “Humans are delicious”. More precisely, “humans with abundant amounts of magical power” are delicious.

That’s weird. I should be a human. Humans don’t eat humans. I’ve got a feeling that if a human ate another human they would lose something precious, and eating isn’t such a revolting...No, delicious action... No, no, no, wait. Wait, myself. Please, wait!!

I’m currently confused.

It’s almost like my brain and the brain that thinks humans are delicious are being sloppily mixed.

My thoughts of not wanting to eat humans, that humans aren’t delicious and the thoughts that I want to eat humans, and that they’re delicious both exist, and because of the contradiction I’m bewildered.

Just what has happened to my brain, has it been fermented or simply turned into miso?

To calm myself down, I started by looking at my surroundings, and apparently I’m in the middle of a forest. I wonder when I arrived at this forest. It’s true that I live in a rural area, but there shouldn’t be such a forest like forest anywhere close.

When I shook my head in incomprehension, a dry sound could be heard close by.

[Vito, what is it? Was the human disgusting?]

Suddenly, from the grass a white rabbit appeared. And it spoke!! It seemed to be one of the formerly popular Angora rabbits, covered with long fur, it was nimbly coming over.

During summer I don’t want to get close to the ball of fur, but it’s a slightly chilly season right now, so I’d by all means love to pet it on my lap.

Nevertheless, I didn’t know that rabbits could speak. It’s not like this is wonderland.

[Vito?]

[Ah, sorry. The village girl was really tasty. Thank you Saus.]

Those smoothly said words surprised myself. The juvenile voice of the rabbit laughed merrily going *kyi kyi*. What's with that cute animal sound! Outrageous! I want to immediately stroke it on my lap———Is not what I thought.

Do I know this rabbit?

When thinking carefully, I seem to recall it. If I recall correctly, I met it a few years ago when it was attacked by a pack of wolves, from which I saved it from. That's right, after that it became attached to me, taking care of food for me. I have those memories, yet I have no memory of experience it myself.

[Yippie! The human this time, wasn't very careful, so it was really easy! Please praise me mo-ore!]

Oh no, my desire to cuddle it is rising. Praise it! I'll praise it as much as it wants if it gets on my lap this instant so I can———for the moment, I purged those thoughts.

In brief, Saus brought that village girl to me, and I ate her.

... You're quite capable with such a cute face, oh rabbit you.

[What is wrong? Vito today, is kind of strange?]

[...Hey, I'm human, right? Why am I... eating humans?]

I don't know if asking is going to help me, but other than the rabbit Saur, there's no one here. I also think it's a strange question to ask, but since I was in doubt about it, I asked if I belonged to Domain: Eukarya; Kingdom: Animalia; Division: Chordata; Subdivision: Vertebrata; Class: Mammalia; Subclass: Theria; Order: Primates; Suborder: Haplorrhini; Family: Hominidae; Subfamily: Homininae; Genus: Homo; Species: *H. sapiens*.

Saus tilted its head in puzzlement, and stared at me with wide, red irises.

———Where rabbits this small?

It's almost like I'm watching it from the roof of a second story building.

I laid my arm next to Saus, and it was bigger than I remembered. Oh dear, have I gained weight? I've even become scaly.

Also, I have to take care so I don't hurt Saus with my three, sharp claws... ——Eh?

I gave my own arm a hard look.

Far from fat, it's covered in scale. And why do I only have three fingers? Sharp claw? Which reminds me, those white curtain like things at the edge of my vision———are wings? And towards me whose thoughts had stopped in shock, Saus threw an even bigger bomb at me.

[What aare you saying? Are you not a dragon, Vito? A white, big, kind dragon!!]

[...Eh?]

“Dragon”?

Just what has happened.

Dragon Life Chapter 2

Chapter 02 – Rabbits are cute. Cuteness is justice. Justice is a rabbit.

I am a human.

That is an unquestionable truth.

But, I can't remember. Dad and mom, the friends I'm sure I have, my own looks, I can't even remember my own name.

I have fragmentary memories of being a human, but I have no irrefutable proof.

In addition to that, since I at the moment look like a dragon, I have trouble persuading myself.

I even have recollections of being a young clueless dragon, and certain other knowledge.

How should I put it, it's almost like my human self was pushed inside the dragon as is.

Almost like possession.

And more than anything, I'm amazed at how calm I am, no matter how confused I am.

[Vito, you o-kay?]

Whilst making cute sounds, it was worried... Now that I think about it, Saus isn't actually speaking. What I hear is the squeaking, and my brain translates it to the closest [Japanese] terms.

Ah, now that I think about it, I'm Japanese. But I can't remember where I lived.

Annoying.

"Vito" is apparently my name. When I search my memory, it seems that I've been staying indoors since I was born in the Vizannu mountains, and that's where my own name comes from. The one who named me was Saus right after meeting him, since I had no name at the time.

Isn't it dangerous to randomly name dragons? I feel like I've read something like that in a story about the master-servant relationship or something like that. When I tried asking Saus, he replied with: [What's that?]. Well, for now, having a name forced on me doesn't seem to give me any trouble. Aah, what a relief. I'm afraid I might carelessly stomp him flat if my lifelong companion ended up being this tiny rabbit... But it's cute, so I might stay with him anyway.

Oh no. Right now's not the time for that.

[Saus, there's something I want to ask you.]

[I've been listening so far? You've kept saying strange things.]

In order to at the very least slightly look each other in the eyes, I sprawled down on the ground. When my head almost grazed the ground, I got a good look at Saus. The rabbit whose eyes met with mine had a long pelt and fluttering, red, fruit-like irises.

[I am, a dragon, right?]

[Yes]

[My name is Vito. Since I was born, I've lived in this mountain, eating humans.]

[What you're really eating is magical power though-]

[Magical power?... Can magic be used, here?]

Now that you mention it, the earlier village girl I ate was delicious because she had abundant magical power, I seem to remember thinking that.

[It can be used, however, the ones who can use it are mostly humans! This is because, only humans who are blessed by the spirits can use magic!]

[Blessed by the spirits? Is that like the spirit of earth and such?]

[Yes! Wind, or fire, or water, there are lots of them!]

So it's fantasy, huh. Magic and things like that aren't the stuff of dreams here. I'm getting excited!

[How do you use magic?]

[Yes, I don't know that that. I mean, I'm only a rabbit. I don't have any magical power, either.]

I see, just a rabbit. No magic power, huh. Okay, since he's cute, I pardon him.

I'm feeling sad that only humans can use magic power, but don't I eat magic power in order to live? Maybe I can use magic too!

I asked Saus about that. Saying that he didn't know, suddenly he began to munch on grass stuffing his cheeks. What's with this animal. he's too cute! If I had hands! If I had humans hands, right this moment I would cuddle him to death!! Oh, how hateful!! Oh how I hate my dragon paws!

Feeling frustrated, I tried to touch my chin against Saus's head, when a small yelp could be heard from beneath my chin. Oh no, I don't know how much strength I should hold back.

[Heeeavy-.]

Sorry.

* * *

After living as a dragon for a while I have realized various things.

How surprised I was after watching my own reflection in the river. The shape of a pure white dragon swayed on the water's surface. My irises were also pure-red like Saus, and I think they looked like large snake eyes. I don't think they give off a bad feeling though. What I was the most surprised about was the food.

Apparently I need to eat humans, living on the magical power that resides within them.

What's more, ordinary humans don't possess large amount of magical power, and thus I need to eat three of them to fill my stomach. This needs to be repeated at the very least once every month. Saus brings me humans to eat, so I don't have to worry about that, but the facial expressions and screams of the humans I assault makes it slightly awkward.

However, when I put them in my mouth my instincts as a dragon take over and I finish them without any issues. Clothes and all included. Back when I was a human the B-horror style grotesque scene would probably have made me feel unwell, making me vomit whereafter I'd probably have fainted.

I wonder if there's a method where I can do without eating, but only sipping the blood isn't enough, and I end up eating the human in two or three bites anyway. I must say that my thinking about how these persons probably had family and sweethearts while munching on them, is ridiculous. Well, I can't help it, I also want to live. In order to live, the sacrifice of others is necessary. This is a perfect example of the food chain. One day I will die, becoming nutrition for the earth.

Besides my own food, I don't needlessly kill anyone. Since I'm alone, I lick the blood that's stuck around my mouth.

The human I ate this time had a reasonable amount of magical power, yet it left a bad taste in my mouth. It's that, the feeling of eating a pudding after its expiration date has expired.

I'm just glad I didn't get an upset stomach, though.

After I finished eating the human, I lovingly watched the close by Saus who was munching on grass. When he noticed me watching, he looked back.

[Finished-?]

[I'm finished. Let's go to the summit of the mountain as promised.]

[Really!? Weee, the grass over there is really tasty-! Probably because of the closeness to

the sun-!]

When bouncing around in happiness, he draws his paws close to his body. He's soo cute.

In order to not crush him beneath me, I sprawled down on the ground, and Saus settled down near my cheek. My skin is covered by hairless scales, but I could feel the warmth of Saus body.

I've been living as a dragon in these mountains for half a year now, and while I'm amazed at my adaptability I don't really think it's anything strange. Sometimes I get the feeling that this is a dream and sometimes I remember my human memories fragmentarily, but they are no hindrance to my daily life as a dragon. Rather, I'd say the the memory storage is divided in a ratio of Dragon : Human = 8:2.

And what's more reassuring than anything is Saus presence.

When looking at, he's only a small rabbit, but to me in this world he's my precious only friend. I've heard that there are other dragons, but in this mountain I'm the only one, and otherwise there are only bears and deer and such typical wildlife. From simply seeing me they run away as fast as they can. It's making me slightly sad. Even though I don't eat animals. When talking about startled hares, Saus is a rabbit, but he's an exception.

Suddenly asking him [Am I a human], not thinking badly of me who has strange gaps of knowledge about this world, simply teaching me what he knows.

Recently he's been worried about me, so he hasn't even went back to his nest and simply slept together with me.

Such a kind rabbit.

* * *

Yup. As I thought, the view from the summit of the mountain is superb.

The Vizannu mountains where I live are the biggest mountains around here, and it's a mountain where you can watch the entire surroundings from one place. The flatness and it being covered by trees are the mountains characteristics.

At the foot of the mountain there is a small village, and further away there is a bigger town. Crossing a small mountain and traveling slightly further from the town, is where an elegant castle can be seen. If I flew for one or two hours I'd reach it, but for the legs of humans it'd probably take weeks.

I once flew high and took a look at the shape of the land, and it was a single giant continent shaped like the letter C. In the center it widens to become thinner at the bottom half. The continent looks like half of a yin yang symbol, or almost like a fetus that has been laid in a circle. The Vizannu mountains reside in the very middle of this continent.

The terrain of the earth that I knew of did not have this shape. Neither did dragons exist there, and no matter how much I watch the sky I don't see a single aircraft.

Sometimes I saw strange dragons that looked different from me flying past. All of them were mounted by humans who looked like they were part of an army, and it almost looked like they were going to a war.

Since I was curious of where they were going, I followed them while taking care not to be seen, but as expected they were going to a war. I always thought all dragons lived in the wild, but it seems like there are dragons who follow humans. When I asked Saus, it told me that those dragons are nearly all fire drakes. Some small dragons were also kept as pets, and I realized that the world was filled with things that I don't know.

Now I'll tell you the reasons why I decided that this is a different world from the one I lived in as a human. I pondered a lot, but this world and my previously lived world are completely different, and I can't even with any certainty tell if the world I lived in as a human actually existed. My ego as a dragon has been established, and my recollections of humanity act more like a background. Even now I don't even remember my own name, so I can't be sure if these memories actually are real or not.

At least for now, I don't need to know anything except how to live as a dragon.

While I was thinking this on one side, Saus was busy stuffing it's cheeks with grass. I don't know the taste of grass, but the grass here is according to Saus the rabbit comparable to how I view humans with a high amount of magical power. The comparison is weird but that's the short of it.

As I laid sprawled out on the soft grass, I decided to take a nap.

Saus is, no matter how he looks, a glutton. If I leave him alone, then all the grass as far as I can see will be eaten. I wonder where he stores all that grass in that tiny body.

The sun's warmth made me sleepy.

I slowly closed my eyelids.

Dragon Life Chapter 3

Chapter 3 – A busybody raven and a wolf prone to worrying

[Saus-? Saus?...Just where has that rabbit gone.]

I'm searching for my missing rabbit friend. He can't have gone too far, but the natural enemies of rabbits, wolves appear around here, so if I don't hurry he might be eaten.

I could try flying to search for him, but Saus is a very tiny rabbit. Additionally, the trees would make it even more difficult to see him. I don't have any choice but to search for him on the ground.

I searched the areas in the forest where Saus favorite grass grew, but all I found were other animals, and when they saw me, they all ran away scared.

Uuh, mommy is lonely. Oh Saus, please appear-... Just where have you gone?

That was when I noticed something rustling in a nearby thicket.

[Saus?]

I thought it would be Saus, but the vibrations in the thicket were larger than usual. Is it a bear or something?...Either way, when it sees me, it will probably flee.

When I strained my eyes, it emerged.

A wolf.

[Kyaa————!!]

This wolf, what an effeminate scream.

How amusing. It's not a wolf from this area. The pelt is different. I don't know about other wolves, but the ones around here are gray.

But the pelt of the wolf in front of my eyes that was shaking with terror was, to a startling degree, pure white. The same white color that I am. It is as if the wolf accidentally bleached itself.

[Even if you eat m-me, I won't taste good!!?? I taste aawful!! About as good as a rotten kebo nut!!]

No, this is where you should run. Usually when animals see me, they run away as fast as they possibly can, yet this white wolf instead lies on the ground, groveling that it tastes awfully. Honestly, I don't know what I should do.

[I taste aawful! You will only upset your stomach-! Rau told me that too! That "You seem

like you'd taste awful"!! So please, I taste awful-!!]

[...I'm not going to eat you though.]

[That's right! Of course you're not going to eat me! After all, I taste awful!!... Huh?]

[I don't have a habit of eating wolves. Because my diet consists of humans.]

In order to have see eye to eye with the panicking wolf, I bent my head down towards the earth. The wolf with a start went from a crawling state, jumping to its feet, retreating. It's a little pitiable afraid. Is this my fault? Is that so? Humans are one thing, but causing animals who I don't eat to be afraid is making me slightly sad. Though I like to think that if I only talk with them I can get on good terms with others like I am with Saus.

[You, you're not going to eat me...?]

[I'm not going to eat you.]

The wolf looked at me with a perplexed expression.

[B-, but Rau told me that dragons are ferocious, Rau told me that you eat anything...]

[I don't know who that Rau is, and I can't speak for other dragons, but at the very least I won't eat you.]

I wonder if she can relax with this, since I tried to say it as gently as possible. But I'm a dragon. While my speech might be translated inside my head into japanese, what actually comes out of my mouth is actually growls. That is to say, this is how it actually sounds:

[Kuun, kuun...]

[Grrrrgrr Gagrr]

Yup, like this it's scary. I wonder if my discussions with Saus are always like this.

I'll try to growl with a high feeling in my voice from now on. It might become slightly better, who knows. Whilst shaking my head in puzzlement over my current situation, I hear Saus scream pitifully in the air.

[Vitooo—!!!]

Saus jumped out from the thickets and ran and hid behind my forelimb, shaking and crying.

Before I could ask him what's the matter, a large black think appeared from the thicket. A large raven. And it's one size bigger when compared to an usual raven.

[Stop running away—!!... Eh?]

The raven who plunged in got an astonished expression when it saw me. The raven landed

on the ground and closed its wings, and this time it was the wolf who went crying for raven.

[R-, Rau! Where did you goo?!! I was so scared!!]

I thought the raven would get a bodyslam from the wolf, but it easily evaded. This raven is skilled.

[What? So you were here?]

[Th-, thats so cruel!! The one who told me to wait here was Rau! E-, Even though I waited her all forever, Rau never came back, and a d-, dragon suddenly appeared!

Argh, I told you I wouldn't eat you.

[I went to try catch a rabbit for you, so don't you dare complain. Even though you can't hunt by yourself.]

[Uuh... That's true, but...]

What did you say? You were going to eat Saus?! I won't allow it.

Saus was still scared, shaking curled up into a ball. In order to calm him, I gently (I recently figured out how to handle my strength) patted him with the top of my chin. Oh no, his kyun kyun purring is so cute.

The raven who witnessed that addressed me.

[Even so, you, the dragon over there. You seem to be different from other dragons... Who are you?]

[I'd rather ask who you are. Were you saying that you were going to eat my precious friend?]

[Friend? That rabbit?]

The raven and wolf watched me stunned, they seemed very surprised.

Is it wrong to have a friend? Saus is cute! Cuteness is justice.

But even if we competed here, probably nothing would come out of it.

[I'm Vito, the dragon who lives in this mountain. I've never seen you before, where did you come from?]

[...Far from here, in the lands of the north.]

[You two travel together?]

[Anything wrong with that?]

There's nothing wrong with it, but they who should be moving in packs and flocks are traveling together with someone of a different species is quite unusual. We're not traveling, but isn't it almost like Saus and I?

One of them is a pure white wolf, the other is a huge raven. Quite an odd combo, but for some reason they manage to stick together.

Could the reason that these two are traveling be that they did something they shouldn't have?

From one glance at them, I grasp something.

[It seems like you have some special circumstances.]

The raven kept silent. It's probably something that he doesn't like talking about.

[Ah, I'm not going to ask you about it, so you don't have to tell me. I just thought it was an unusual combination, and having come from the north, you must have crossed that large river, right? I thought that you coming this far is great.]

I once looked at the shape of the continent from the top of the mountain, and between the middle part and the northern part of the continent, there's a huge river.

There's a bridge over it, but that bridge was made by humans and is heavily guarded. For an animal to use that bridge would be foolish, and swimming over the river must have been terrible.

[A-, about that. Since Rau can fly, he carried me over the river.]

The suspiciously hesitant wolf chimed in. She still seems wary of me, or rather, afraid, but seeing me talk normally with the raven she seemed to gain a bit of courage. Yes, how pleasant.

That may be as it may, but she got carried huh. The raven is slightly larger than the wolf, true. With his size, to call him a small dragon wouldn't be an exaggeration.

But even with that it must have been terrible. Even if the wolf is slightly smaller, it's still heavy.

[Whitey, don't say unnecessary things.]

[I-, I'm so sorry.]

Apparently the wolf is named Whitey. It's a fitting name considering the wolf's looks, but since it's so simple it's kind of amusing.

The wolf somehow reminds me of a dog.

The raven is Rau, and the wolf whitey. Even for me with my bad memory, it feels like I'll be

able to easily remember them.

[Vito...]

I heard a fragile voice from below. With anxious eyes, he looked up at me, and sniffed.

That's right. Rau was chasing Saus when he came here.

[It's okay now, Saus.]

Then I turned toward those two.

[I'm sorry, but if you're looking for prey, I'd ask you to look for something else. Since you two traveled together, you couldn't simply watch your precious friend getting eaten in front of yourselves without doing anything, right?]

[... What you are saying is true. But you as a dragon who preys on everything nearby here, for what reason do you shelter that rabbit?]

Do dragons have such a brutal reputation? From watching their attitude I can't help but think so.

[T-, This dragon, said it didn't eat animals.]

It's true that I only eat humans, and when the wolf said that, Rau opened his eyes wide. I will hide the fact that Rau's pure black eyes without any white in them are as round and cute as Saus in my heart.

[You say that you only eat humans?... Are you perhaps an Earth Dragon?]

[What's that?]

[One kind of dragon that the humans named.]

Rau seemed to think about something while grumbling.

I think I've heard about "Earth Dragons" somewhere.

I'm sure it's in my human memories. It's one of the names I came across when I lived on earth. I don't really remember that well, but the earth floats in space, and volcanoes throw up fire. Mountains can also be seen as the spine, the continent looked like a dragon with spread wings and someone began calling it Earth Dragon, is what I think I read in a book a long time ago.

At that time when reading it, I thought "Oh, that's so dreamy". I didn't think this would happen though.

[You know that there are a great variety of dragons living in the continent, right?]

[I don't know their names though.]

[The ones who named the dragons are the humans. The term dragon is a general term describing all of you.]

In other words, it's along the style of Family: Dragon; Genus: Earth Dragon. Are there so many different kinds of dragons?

[When you speak of dragons, it's those who are covered in scales, who breathe fire and fly through sky, right?]

When I said that, Rau seemed astounded as he let out a huge sigh.

[...You have me beat. To think there was an Earth Dragon that was so ignorant about the world.]

[Am I wrong?]

[For the dragons living in this continent, forget breathing fire, there are even those who can't fly. This is common knowledge. The most common dragon is the wyrm. The next most common is the type domesticated by humans, the fire drake. Wyverns can fly, but not for long periods, and basilisks can't even fly, aah, wyrms can't fly either. There are also those who live by eating corpses, who are named Nidhögg. Anyway, there are lots of different kinds of dragons, but the type among them that is the rarest, and additionally by the humans of a certain kingdom taking the title "legendary" is the Earth Dragon.]

Indeed. They're all names I recall. This is probably also thanks to the conversion function in my brain. I see, since there were no dragons in that world, it defaulted to names from stories and legends. I don't know by what criterion though. Somehow it's fresh.

[Compared to the usual dragons, the Earth Dragon is a somewhat odd existence. A dragon with scales, that can breathe fire and can fly through the sky, like you believed dragons to be.

It's rare enough to be called an endangered species, but it's by no means under any threat. The reason being that even though their numbers are few, they have existed as they are now for thousands, no, for tens of thousands of years. Ferocious and with an inclination for eating humans. Apparently they don't eat animals at all.]

I don't eat anything but humans. And I only need magical power to live. I don't know what other dragons live on, but apparently there are no other dragons who live solely on humans.

[...And that is, me.]

[Who knows. It's what humans say so I don't know anything in detail. What I know is that several thousand years ago, a dragon with unimaginable power several times intervened in struggles between humanity, and that rumor even spread as far as us. I don't really have any interest in the doing of humans, though.]

It seems Rau got tired of talking, because he flapped his large wings and settled on a tree branch. It's probably easier for him to rest on a branch than on the ground.

[You sure know a lot.]

[I've done much traveling.]

He's been loitering near places where humans are. Rumours and general knowledge is accumulated whether he wants it or not, he replies while grooming his feathers.

[And you sure explained much to me.]

Thanks to that I began to gain some knowledge on dragons. When I frankly thanked him, he replied [That's not why I told you.] So he's a tsundere. I understand.

[Rau is very kind!! If an animal is troubled, he can't let it be. He even brings me, who is bad at hunting, food.]

[You're at fault for only eating fruits even though you're a carnivore.]

What's with that incompetence.

[B-, but I feel sorry for them!]

[That's why you're always made a fool of by the other wolves! Wolves who after they bring down prey in the end cry, apologize and then leave die out!]

What's with that, how cute. Could it be that their travels are because Whitey got chased out of her pack? And then the busybody Rau said something like: [Damn, I've got no choice, huh, I'll follow you.] Is that so? Oh no, my face is breaking out into a grin. These two are too much like a couple. How similar their fight is to a lover's quarrel.

[...Vito.]

[Sorry, it was scary, wasn't it. But they don't seem to be bad animals. That's why, will you forgive them?]

Watching the bewildered Saus nodding, causes my heart to beat in excitement.

However, no matter how long I waited, the lover's quarrel wouldn't end. A little is charming, but if it continues indefinitely then it will only cause the day to become depressing. I tried calling out to them several times, but it doesn't seem that they hear me. With no other options I move my large body between the two, forcefully ending the conversation. The two stared blankly at me who suddenly appeared between them, but my next words caused them to look even more puzzled.

[Are you hungry?]

Dragon Life Chapter 4

Chapter 4 – I got a weird nickname. Please stop using it!

Deep in the Vizannu mountains, in a place that humans can't possibly reach by themselves, is my dwelling. Well, it is a naturally made cave, but it's drafty in a good way, so it's got good ventilation. Not far from there, there is a stream, and around the stream there are plenty of fruit trees. If there was a unicorn here, it'd turn into a scene from a fairytale, is what I always think.

Which reminds me that I asked Rau, and Unicorns are apparently real. Apparently they are sacred to a certain kingdom, and are being looked after. I'd like to meet one once, but apparently because the image of a pure maiden is too strong, so it would be impossible for me. My memories as a human is that of a girl, but right now I'm a dragon. I might be female, but with the appearance of a dragon, meeting one would probably be impossible.

Since I thought the two of them would be hungry after I ended their lovers quarrel, I guided them to this place. Whitey stuffed herself with sparkling eyes, while Rau seemed to pick at a fruit disinterestedly, but his gaze was always at Whitey. Saus was cautious in the beginning, but after a while he relaxed and together with Whitey ran around the stream.

Since I could ask the knowledgeable Rau about this world during that time, I was satisfied. Rau really seems to know a bit of everything. That this continent is called Batoria, the various circumstances of the different kingdoms, everything was quite detailed. The country closest to here is the Alvina kingdom which seems to be on bad terms with the Tiruzoto kingdom to the north. Because the Alvina kingdom won in a war several decades ago, outwardly it's thought that they have a favourable relationship, but the old disputes have never really died down, and recently they have started with small skirmishes again. The last time the two countries had a large scale war was a hundred years ago, and it seems that an Earth Dragon was participating. The country that considers the Earth Dragon as a sacred beast is the Alvina kingdom, and the Tiruzoto kingdom considers the Unicorn as a sacred beast. Other countries seem to have their own sacred beasts, so it seems kind of like a difference of religion.

Originally, it seems that Earth Dragons can form a contract with a single human. However, that seems to have come to an end, and in history only four dragons are known to have obeyed humans. Compared to other dragons, Earth Dragons temperaments are violent and fierce, but maybe because of my human memories, that doesn't apply to me. Could it be because I have sense of a human? Having the sense of a human yet eating humans, makes me want to retort, but let's ignore that part for now. Since I'm a dragon now, in order to live I have no choice but to eat humans.

But this truly is a miraculous spectacle.

A rabbit that by all reason should get eaten is playing with a wolf, while a raven and a dragon are watching over them. I must say that this is too comical.

* * *

The two of them decided to stay at this mountain for a while. It was overflowing with Whiteys beloved fruits, and for them it was a relatively safe place.

I once took Rau and Whitey to the place where I eat humans, but they didn't have any particular reaction. Whitey told me [That's terrific, I respect you!]. She doesn't seem to think of anything except animals as pitiful. Is it okay if it's a human? Well, it's true that for them animals are closer existences than humans to themselves. For them, are humans nothing more than giant vermin? I might have went overboard with that comparison though.

After a few months, something terrible happened. Rau who loitered near human habitation said that he had some amusing information to share.

[Vito, you are turning into a rumour.]

Rumour? Wondering what this was about, I tilted my head in confusion.

[Apparently there's a "man eating dragon" in these Vizannu mountains. And what's more, it's incredibly ferocious and the size of a third of the mountain with bloodshot eyes, sharp, jagged fangs which it uses to skewer its victims before it eats them. The reason villagers and travelers keep disappearing is because they are eaten by the ferocious dragon, is the rumour.]

It's not incorrect, however... It's not wrong, but it's wrong. I'm big, but no way in hell am I the size of one third of the mountain. Regarding bloodshot eyes, it's true that my eyes are red, but are they bloodshot? Heey, are they bloodshot? When I relied upon Saus and asked him if they were, he said [You're eyes are like beautiful gemstones-!] he said with a laugh. What a good kid! Mommy is happy!

[What's more, because of the repeating dissapperances, the kingdom have hired a subjugation party, sending it after the dragon.]

[Eeeh!? Isn't that dangerous!?!]

[It's better than a squad under direct supervision of the country, right? Since it's a miscellaneous group of mercenaries. You're not someone to die that easily.]

[Eh? No way.]

An instant answer. To think that a subjugation party was formed just to deal with me. A mismatched group? Isn't that completely different from the defenseless humans up till now a group of men who holds weapons going [Let's go kill us some dragons, rawr!]. I've got no experience dealing with that type of people, so I'm honestly worried.

[If you just breathe some fire in their general direction, they'll melt, right?]

[I've never breathed fire like that, I'll have you know.]

I've breathed a small flame on cold nights to get a bit of warmth, but I've never breathed a fire big enough to fight several people.

[And even if I did that, it would just turn the mountain into a wildfire. Who will extinguish that fire?]

[A spirit of water maybe?]

[Are you stupid, Whitey? The only ones who can use spirits are humans.]

[Eh? Is that so? Why?]

[Well, that's because spirits are things made by humans. Was it called piety? Humans have since ancient times believed that spirits lived inside them, and somehow they turned real is what I heard. That's why spirits answer to humans and not to us animals. In return, we animals have the protection of the Big Tree.]

Piety is really terrific, huh. Humans not only created a god, but also spirits? That's quite some utility. Wait a moment. Then what does that make me who eat spirits for sustenance?

...I thought to ask, but it seemed like it'd turn complicated, so decided not to.

[What is that Big Tree?]

[A fundamental existence of this world.]

[I've heard about it- in a forest very, veery far from here, is where it is.]

[It's an existence that guards all life. The truth and reason of this world that interferes in order for the world to not perish.]

That sounds too difficult.

[I've only heard about in legends, though, so I can't say with any certainty if it really exists. More importantly, shouldn't you be more worried about the subjugation party?]

Ooh, I forgot!! Because he answers any questions, the discussion easily gets derailed.

[That subjugation party, when will it come?]

[Tonight, is what I heard.]

[Is that so, tonight, huh... Waaait!? Tonight?]

A night attack, huh. What human-like thinking.

Since the sun is about to set, there's not a long time until night.

[I've got no choice, huh... Saus, go to your own den today. Rau and Whitey should also get as far away from me as possible.]

[Eeeh-!? Bu-ut, Vito, will be in danger!]

[I will be fine, I've got a plan.]

If they're going to perform a night attack, then I will wait in a forest at the base of the mountain and surprise them. Those overly enthusiastic dragon slayers probably won't expect to find a dragon immediately.

I don't know how many participants the subjugation party has, but let's pray for them to not be too many.

* * *

Finding somewhere to hide close to the forest entrance turned out to be next to impossible. I'm pure white like Saus and Whitey after all. According to Rau that is the special characteristic of the Earth Dragon, but for a surprise attack I'd have preferred to have been black. I guess I should cover myself in mud this time.

In the end I somehow managed to find a hiding place, and after waiting with bated breath for a while, I saw a torch from a distance.

———They really came.

It's not like I doubted Rau, but that they really appeared made me sigh. I don't enjoy pointless killing, but this is legitimate self defense and I don't really have an alternative.

As they got closer, I got a better look. There were five or six persons I think. Not very many, which gave me relief.

But they were humans who brought weapons with their eyes set on me. I can't be careless.

I waited for them to walk past me, then dragged the last of them into the thicket. Before he could scream, I cleanly bit his head off.

———He wasn't very tasty...

[He-, hey? Where's Gan?]

It seems they noticed that they lost one of their companions, so they became agitated.

I threw the body that I only bit the head off in front of them.

[Gaaah!] [Gan!] [Th-, this is a lie, right!?!]

Whilst screaming they each readied their weapons.

[It's-, it's the dragon!! It's the man eating dragon! Be careful!!]

As I thought, but its "man eating dragon" without change, huh.

I left the thicket, inhaled air and roared loudly.

It was a roar loud enough to shake the ground, and I had heard from Saus that he could hear it when he was on the other side of the mountain. Thank god I practiced roaring.

I wonder if it's because of my pressure, but the members of the subjugation party bore pained expression while they closed our distance.

[Sh-, shiiiiit!!!]

[Get a move on!!]

Before their swords reached me, I let out a breath of fire. I don't know if I did it well, but I did it like earlier and took a deep breath then blew as hard as I could.

However, this time I willed the fire producing organ in the back of my throat to work and the breath went surprisingly well. The two humans who rushed to attack me quickly screamed before turning into charcoal. But, since I don't know how to hold back, the forest turned into a sea of flames. Oops.

However, suddenly something like a rain squall descended upon the forest and suppressed the fire. A human wearing a robe and holding a staff floated above the ground surrounded by a glittering magical pattern. It seems this human used magic to extinguish the fire.

The fact that he can use magic means that he's got magical power. In other words, he enters the "tasty human" category. I finally became motivated. I haven't eaten any humans with good amounts of magical power for a while, so this is making me happy. The fact that he used water magic probably means he's received the blessing of a water spirit. I'm looking forward to it.

I swiped and bit at the remaining weapon wielding human, instantly snuffing his life, making the mage the only living human left. His expression warped in fear, too afraid to stand up he fell on his backside screaming whilst trying to shrink away. I advanced quickly towards him and without mercy bit off his head. I didn't miss that his expression changed into an expression relief at the last moment. But leaving that aside, a sweet feeling overwhelmed me.

Verdict: The best.

He was not as tasty as the village girl, but among those I've tasted so far, this guy was the one with the second tastiest magical power. This subjugation party wasn't so bad, after all.

So far I've eaten plenty of humans who have been blessed by spirits, but depending on the type of spirit the person had been blessed with, the taste of the magical power differs. For

example, the village girl was blessed by the spirits of earth, and her magical power had a warm flavor. Someone blessed by a wind spirit has a refreshing magical power. Those blessed by a spirit of fire have an energetic, yet delicate magical power. Spirits of water have a tender, damp taste.

Depending on the magical power, the taste differs, and the amount I get satiated also changes. My favorite taste is that of humans blessed by spirits of earth.

When I finished eating I surveyed the scene, discovering that it was a sea of blood. The half eaten corpse and the corpse of the man I slashed with my claw and took a bite out of were scattered around all over. This is like a splatter film.

As a human I can't really leave it as it is, but as a dragon this can be considered a warning to leave me alone.

To think that I became a monster capable of causing this tragedy of blood, but I wasn't particularly sad. Because I have Saus there for me, and Rau and Whitey too. I believe that I can get on good terms with other animals if I only can talk to them.

That even if humans don't understand me, I am myself.

At the time I still didn't really understand.

That in the future I had no choice but to forge a close relationship with that human.

Dragon Life Chapter 5

Chapter 5 – It's about time I moved, let's do that.

It's been three months since the subjugation parties started coming, but different subjugation parties keep coming without tiring.

Since then I've encountered five different subjugation squads, and until now the number of members in the squads have tripled, and their strategies have all been different. Yet I've not had a problem handling them. It might be because of my thick scales that do not let swords through, or perhaps because I'm getting used to handling these subjugation squads.

When they see me they all look surprised, but when I attack them they come to their senses and try to attack me. Is a white dragon that unusual?

...Oh, that's right. Rau told me that I'm really unusual. I completely forgot.

Anyway, I've grown completely fed up with their attacks.

When they come I have to take Saus and company to a safe place in the mountain recesses, and since they come so often I'm not even hungry so I don't even think about eating. As a result, I've been leaving the corpses as they are. I eat the humans who can use magic, though. It's about time I seriously thought about moving. Rau and Whitey are thinking about continuing their travels anyway.

[We've completely stayed here too long, and we were originally headed for the southern lands anyway.]

Since before I've said that I'd get lonely without them around, and I was expecting to part with them at some point. In addition, if they stayed at this mountain any longer it would probably be dangerous. I think it's a wise decision. However, with them here it would be fine somehow, but when they leave it could instead become dangerous for Saus to live here.

When humans enter the mountains, they might cause harm to the other animals living here. I often encounter the corpses of deer killed for food and bears with only their claws removed.

And not only animals, there have been humans attacking lost girls, too. Since it irritated me I turned all of them into charcoal.

A rabbit is probably the best thing a human can catch for food. It seems they use the pelt to make clothes and accessories too. Even though that fluffiness only have meaning when they are alive.

That night, I thought. I thought and thought.

As long as those subjugation squads don't defeat me, they will probably keep coming. So far they have been nothing but miscellaneous collections of mercenaries, but as their numbers

increase they might be replaced with a squad of knights under the direct command of the kingdom. Even more horrible would be if they decided to burn down the mountain, which is something humans might decide to do.

Either way I feel that I can't stay much longer in this mountain.

I must find some other safe place to live, but I who have lived my entire life in this mountain have never been out in the world. If I meet something more terrifying than myself out there, I might die.

Let think. Where is the most safe place?

If I want to fool my enemies, start with my allies.

If I want to hide a tree, within a forest.

In that case, if I want to hide a dragon, it should be with other dragons? No! Dragons are ferocious is what I heard. A dragon that you can reach through speech like me is quite rare according to Rau.

———That's right! I forgot the most fundamental important matter.

That is, to hide "me" ——

There is only one answer.

If one wants to hide me, then place me "among humans".

Before I became a dragon, I was a lone human.

* * *

That night, I left my cot and went to the not very far away stream. Saus and the others are probably soundly asleep. The reason I left now was to make sure of that. I sat down in a deep pool in the stream. A white dragons face was reflected upon the waters surface. I never got tired of watching my splendid scales. I'm no narcissist, but I'm fond of them.

But if I'm to hide among humans, then I can't keep the form of a dragon. However, I wonder if I can take the form of a human. Other animals don't have magical power so they can't use magic, but I live by eating magical power so maybe I can use it, is what I thought.

But I don't know how to use it.

I sighed.

I don't remember how I looked when I still was a human, so who's shape should I take and such.

Now that I think of it, that village girl sure was cute. Was she her chestnut colored, ending in

two buns? Her face was ordinary, but her skin was a healthy suntanned color, and her pupils were slightly quiet but a blue clear color about the same as this spring which gave a good impression. Wait, that's not something I who ate her should say, huh.

— — — Okay, lets try becoming her.

If I don't try, nothing will happen. I closed my eyes and brought her physical appearance to mind.

I imagined myself wrapped in a high and slim deep crimson dress.

Chestnut hair with two buns with healthy suntanned skin, quiet blue eyes. Voice is cute but a slightly boyish soprano alto.

And lastly, a human who has received the protection of all kinds of spirits.

Even though it was a year ago, I still clearly remember her. As expected, it's probably because she's the first human I ate.

When I slowly opened my eyelids, the shape of a smiling girl was reflected on the water in front of me. The next moment it changed to a surprised expression, but I realized that it was my own reflection.

The hands in the pool were without questions the hands of a human. They were the hands of a still growing young woman. When I touched my face it was not covered with a single scale, and the skin was smooth. I looked once more at the shape on the water's surface to make sure.

[Wow. I really became a human.]

The voice was also that of a human.

I was still unused to the voice so it felt itchy. Standing up and walking also seemed like it'd be difficult, but because of my memories as a human I got used to it after a few minutes.

[Ah-, ah-, yup. Which reminds me, this is how it feels to talk, huh.]

My words were as expected translated into japanese in my brain, but it proved no hurdle for speaking.

Since I became happy upon turning into a human, I began running around in the stream, and since I got a new lower viewpoint, it felt fresh.

I wonder if I can become other humans too? I attempted becoming different humans, but it seems like I can only turn into those I've eaten. And if I don't clearly remember their appearance it seems it won't work.

However, only turning into her is already a great harvest. Like this I won't stick out when I try to blend in among humans.

Who would think that this village girl is a dragon?

Feeling slightly eccentric I began to giggle, whereupon I noticed that the sun was about to rise.

The morning sure came quickly today. I haven't slept a wink but I'm not the least bit tired.

I thought to wake Saus and the others, but they were already up.

They had noticed that I was gone and kept calling my name. I'm thankful that I could still understand them even under my human guise.

[Saus.]

When I called his name, he turned to face me. I hugged the rabbit who hardened in surprise upon seeing me, cowering my face with his fluffy fur.

No good, this fluffiness becoming a habit!

The smell of grass and the warmth of the sun tickled my nose. Saus was still frozen and was looking up at me.

[Saus, you're cruel, it's me.

[...Vito?]

[That's right.]

I brought his soft fur to my face one more time, rubbing our cheeks together.

[Eh? Vito? Why have you turned into a human?]

[When I thought I wanted to become one, I became one.]

While we were talking, Rau and Whitey came rushing over. They were cautious when they saw my appearance, but when they understood it was me they both of them stared at me slack jawed, which looked hilarious.

[I thought since I live on magical power that I could use magic aswell. This is the result. What do you think, isn't it awesome?]

[It's awesome but...were you always female?]

Rau looked so suspicious that it was funny.

[Well, this is the shape of one of the humans I ate. But in any case, even when I was a dragon I was still a female. Huh, could it be that you didn't know?]

[Rau didn't know!?!]

[As if I know how to determine the gender of dragons!]

[Even though you're both female!!]

Whitey threw an earthshattering bomb. Eh? Rau is female? A woman? A girl?...I was certain she was a man though...

[I don't want to hear that from a useless male!]

Rau also threw a bomb.

... Whitey is a male? A man? He was a boy?

In short, I've been thinking of them as the opposite gender. I don't get animals.

Incidentally, I'm assured that Saus is a boy. What a relief.

Before those two start their lover's quarrel again I should divert the conversation.

But Saus is so fluffy. I've never seen him at so close a distance before, but his pink nose is always twitching which is so cute.

[Let's leave that aside, I've got a favor I want to ask you two.]

Their look when they tilt their head, saying "Favor?" is also too cute.

[You'll resume your travels in the near future, right? I wish you to take Saus with you if you can.]

[And why is that?]

The most surprised is Saus. His drooping ears with a start, straightened out.

[The reason why I tried to become a human, is because I want to try blending in with the human world. I think that as it is now I'm causing problems for the animals living here and for the mountain itself. I thought about searching for a different place to live, but I think I'll fit just fine in human society. Even with me gone the subjugation squads will probably keep coming, and Saus will be in danger. That's why I want you to take him with you.]

[If you're exposed it will get dangerous!]

This rabbit is more worried about me than where he's going himself. I gently stroked my small friend. The truth is that the best for Saus would be to return to his rabbit flock. But if he did that he would stay on this mountain. I'd like to avoid that as long as it is dangerous here. I thought about taking him with me, but that would be difficult.

I thought about traveling with them, but since I eat humans, I think it'd cause problems for them. That's why I decided that I'm not going with them.

[Will you allow my selfish request?]

Cute red eyes looked at me. My precious friend who shared my red and white colors. If he didn't live in this mountain, I'd probably not have handled living here.

[Because I'm sure we'll meet again, someday.]

I did not say I'd go to meet them. Because I can't guarantee that I will be able to. But I'm sure that someday we'll meet again. I believe that.

Saus was silent for a while, before opening his small pink mouth and in his familiar voice purring.

[That is what Vito thought, yes...If so then I am fine with that. I also do not want to become a burden to Vito... Also, also visiting many places sounds like it would be fun!]

[Saus... Thank you.]

I buried my face in his soft fur, gently hugging him. I could feel his somewhat fast heartbeat which made me happy.

[Oi, oi, aren't you forgetting us?]

I forgot about the both of them.

[Isn't it fine? Saus is so tiny that you wouldn't even notice if he rode on your back!]

[It's been decided that I'm gonna carry him, huh.]

Rau sighed, but saying [It can't be helped, huh.] she seemed to agree. I don't need to mention that Whitey was eager about it having Saus joining them from the start.

Yet, a raven, a wolf and a rabbit... What an unbalanced combination.

[Rau, Whitey, thank you. Thank you too Saus, for listening to my selfishness.]

I am selfish.

Even though there are lots of other animals on this mountain, I won't save anyone but the precious life in front of me.

I'm fine with being called unfair. I'm also fine with others talking badly about me.

Because I'm a base and ferocious dragon.

Dragon Life Chapter 6

decided to descend Vizenna mountain and head for human habitation, but I avoided the village at the foot of the mountain. Because this village girl is by all likelihood a former resident of this village. It would be weird if a girl who went missing for a year suddenly reappeared. It was a long distance, but I decided to walk towards a town further away from the village. Even now I think it was something reckless to do.

But because I met peddlers, villagers and townspeople along the way, I couldn't resume my dragon form and fly. It would stand out, and since I'm going to live as a human from now on I didn't want to use cheats. I decided to only use my dragon shape when I had no other choice. Like when eating.

I arrived in a town where humans lived for the first time, but the atmosphere inside was completely different from what I expected which surprised me.

Men dressed as soldiers were standing at the town entrance, inspecting arriving travelers. And they were quite strict about it. It appears this town is in the territory of the Alvina kingdom, and they were very vigilant about people from other countries, especially the Tiruzoto kingdom.

I successfully mixed into a merchant party and somehow managed to get inside the town, but the scenery of the town was also curious.

I am a genuine japanese person. Right now I might be a dragon, but to the scene that was so different from that of Japan, I couldn't help but watch in a daze. It was a street that looked like it was part of a movie set for a movie about middle age europe. Sometimes horse carriages would pass, acting as if they owned the stone paved street. Men were wearing pants and shirts that seemed easy to move about in. Some gentlemen wearing clothing that looked like tuxedos were also around. The women were all wearing dresses that reached to their feet, and none of them had short hair like the men had. All of them had had pale colored eyes and hair. I'd thought that there would be people with brown, blond and red hair, but that there were some who had blue and green hair surprised me. I wonder what they used to color their hair. I thought it mysterious that those with such striking haircolors were walking around the town without anyone batting an eye.

What further caused me to wonder was that I couldn't see a single person with black hair and eyes. I thought I would see at least one by coming here, but I couldn't see one as far as my eyes could reach. The only black creature I've seen so far has been Rau. Not being able to see my familiar black color made me feel lost, and this made me realize that this world isn't the world I knew.

Most houses were made of brick and timber, the places where people lived were usually two story buildings and shops were one story buildings. Though I call them stores, because they are similiar to market stands done behind gates, I don't know what else to call them.

[Miss, how about one of these?]

When a merchant said that to me and held out something that looked like a fruit my way, I realized that I didn't have any human money.

It seems like I need to go job hunting in order to fit in the world of humans. After I refused the uncle who called out to me I aimlessly wandered the town wondering what I should do now. A job, huh. I wonder if not having an ID rules me out. Hmm, that would be worrisome.

When looking for a building that would help me with job hunting, I noticed the words "Hello Work" on a sign in front of a certain establishment, which caused me to unintentionally burst into laughter. It was turned into Hello Work inside of my mind, but it didn't fit the street at all.

I'm certain that my brother was indebted to Hello Work.... Aaah, that's right, I had a brother. Strange that I suddenly recalled that.

I wonder if it really is a place for job hunting, but grasping at straws I decided to enter the building, where a man and a woman were frantically bustling about.

[Good grief! Cancelling the day before is so rude! How did her parents raise her, it's to the degree where I want to see her parents!]

[Even if we complain, there's nothing we can do about it Lily, rather than that focus on finding a girl to replace her!]

They were busily comparing the papers they held. It might be compact inside, but they properly had a reception desk and a meeting table.

Aside from a blonde woman and a brunet, there was no one there.

[That's right! How about that girl who came the other day? I'm certain she said she wanted to live-in work!]

[She's no good. I'm sure she decided to start working in the Alexander family's house!]

[Just when did she decide that!? Argh!]

[It's because you're never able to decide, Lily!]

[It's because I couldn't find a household that fit that girl. Aah, right now I'd nominate a cat to that position if I had one!]

There's a dragon here who isn't busy.

They seemed kind of occupied so I thought I'd return at a later time, when the woman noticed me and closed in on me with glittering eyes going [Oh, my my.]

Overpowering me she caused me to take one step backwards. She grabbed both of my hands solidly and shook them furiously.

This is a true hand shake.

[Could it be, that you came here looking for a job!?!]

[What!?!]

The man also noticed me, looked up from his documents and rushed over.

[Aah, you seem busy so I will return another day-.]

It came. The man interrupted my speech and looked over me from the top of my head till the front of my feet.

[Fairly decent appearance with a proper carriage of the body, age around fifteen or sixteen? ...Yup, she's perfect!]

[Wait, Roi! You're being rude to the girl!]

[Aah, sorry Lily-. It's because of this emergency, so I did it unintentionally.]

Unintentionally, what do you mean unintentionally?

I get a similar feeling of incompetence from this man as I get from Whitey. His face is unkempt, and his clothes are worn-out. He seems like the type that'd be dominated by his future wife.

Miss Lily in comparison to that, was not wearing especially expensive clothes, but she had a glittering aura. Maybe she had a decent amount of magical power. Yeah, she looks delicious.

[Could you tell us your name?]

[I'm Vito.]

[Oh, what an unusual name. Where are you from?]

[From the Vizennu mountains in the east...From a village at it's foot.]

[There are a lot of villages there, aren't there. Could it be that you're from the village closest to the mountain, Viennu?]

[Yes, that's right.]

A straight faced lie.

[I seee. Is it okay if we ask you for the reason why you're here searching for a job?...Ah, it's not like we're suspicious of you. Girl's looking for jobs are rare. Most girls marry and help out with the jobs at their parents house. That's why the girls who come to us usually have some special reason. There are even girls who come from villages farther away than your village... I don't think your village is so poor that it can't look after one girl though?]

Since it's come to this, I must pierce through with a lie! Let's GO!

My head was spinning, desperately thinking of some reason. A reason for a girl to leave her village alone, there must be some! Not a boy, a girl... That's right, the most real thing that is happening right now might have enough persuasive power, so they might believe me.

But that means involving my existence... Well, whatever. It's not like I'm there in that mountain any longer.

[Recently a man-eating dragon has been coming out of the mountain... Do you know about that?]

[Eeh, if I remember correctly subjugation parties have went there several times, but not a single one have returned alive.]

As I thought, it's been spread here as well. While it's convenient, it gives me mixed feelings.

I hold both of my hands in front of my chest and look downwards sadly. There are no tears, but no matter how they look at me I should look like a pitiful girl.

[Daddy and mommy told me that if this continues staying here would be dangerous, so go enter the service of someone far from here. I was in danger but I wanted to stay with them... ! But daddy and mommy frantically begged me. That if something happened to me it would be too late... And people from the village who have entered the mountain have gone missing, and honestly I... I was so scared. That's why I came to this village. But on the way I lost all my belongings in the river. While at a loss, I came to this establishment.]

I could hear someone sniveling. It certainly wasn't me. It seemed like it came from next to miss. Lily, so it was probably the man. When I snuck a glance, he was wiping his tears with a pale handkerchief.

What a soft-hearted person. I'm sorry for lying to you.

[Li, Lily-, let's go with her. We must go with her! If she keeps at it she will learn etiquette, and above all else, she's so pitiful! I want to help her, even if it is only a little!]

[Eh... Right. But stop being filthy in front of a girl, Roi.]

[I, I'm sorry. But the tears won't stop.]

I wonder if it's okay deceiving such a nice person. I feel slightly guilty, but I really need to find a job. And I think this is the best chance I'll get. If I was one day slower or faster, I probably wouldn't have this chance. That's why I'm not going to have this chance slip away from me!

[Errr, I don't have an ID.]

[You don't need to worry. Didn't I tell you? That girls with special circumstances come here. And you even told us your birthplace. We only need to make a new one so you don't have to worry. I'm more worried about the girl who suddenly cancelled. We don't have another girl

to replace her... Honestly, you saved us by coming here.]

[After all, it's the castle we're talking about.]

Having finally stopped his running tears and snot, Roi said so while looking at his papers.

I see, the castle huh. The castle? That's where a girl with circumstances...

W h a t ?

[You know that the Alvina country is to the west of this town, right? I want you to work in the castle over there. But it's easy work that even you will be able to do. The rules are slightly strict, but you will have all necessities covered, and the pay is nothing to sneeze at either. Such a good job doesn't get offered very often, I never thought that girl would refuse it! Aah, it makes me furious!]

... Serve in the castle. This has turned into something extravagant. I hoped that I would be able to find a decent job in this town, but I had no idea that I would be taken from this town and find work in the Alvira kingdom to the west. You never knows what can happen in a human life. Ah, for me that's dragon life, huh.

[I won't ask you to go immediately, so relax. You will be going there after the one who put up the request has taught you the absolute minimum you need to learn. You will be together with two other girls, so I think you'll get along well.]

That's reassuring. If I went to work in the castle, I'd not know what to do right now, anyway.

[But you will start tomorrow. Is that alright?]

[Yes. No problem at all.]

Miss Lily looked very happy, she smiled as she hugged me. Uwaa-, something soft is hitting my face, causing my heart to beat. So human women were this soft, with such a good smell.

Until now I had only frolicked with animals, so I didn't know.

[Come to think of it, you lost your luggage in the river, right? If so, then please stay here for the night. It's the least we can do for you. I'll even give you dinner and breakfast!]

[Eh, is that okay?]

That's like a wish come true. I was wrangling my head about where I was going to stay until tomorrow, so this is welcome. I'm used to sleeping outside, but there doesn't seem to be a place to sleep outside in this town anyway.

[It's fine, isn't it, Roi?]

It seemed like Roi had begun preparing the documents immediately. Looking over our way with a goodnatured smile, he vigorously shook his head up and down. What an amusing person.

They asked me some questions in regards to the documents and the printing of the ID, after which they led me upstairs. There they immediately started making the ID.

When I asked them if ID's are that easy to create, they replied that yes, they are. In the beginning, the papers are only needed when coming and going in big towns and between countries to tell from what country they are from, and usually those who live in villages don't have one. That's why creating new ID's for people who come from villages isn't that uncommon.

While they were creating the ID, they asked me about the village, but there was no particular problem. The ID's are formed so that they can be easily worn such as a bracelet or a ring, and the ID these people made for me was a cheap bracelet. While thinking that when I turn into a dragon I must take it off first, my own ID made me happy which caused me to break into a smile. This form is that girl's form so I feel somewhat guilty, but it's at the same time the proof that I'm here.

After that I stayed in the establishment, and since it was already night Mr. Roi had already left for his own house. It seems that the only one currently living in this establishment was Miss Lily and originally the owner lived here. Lily was entrusted with this establishment because the owner had to travel far for a business trip.

Miss Lily made dinner in the kitchen that was inside the house. I felt bad about only waiting for the food, so I helped but I'm honestly quite bad at housework. What I can do is only at the level of peeling the skins off vegetables. I'm envious of Miss Lily who is so good at housework.

The meal that Miss Lily made was delicious. Regarding just how delicious it was, then if I was to compare it to anything, it would be to with a human whose magical power was of a good quality with a decent amount who I ate whole. What's more, one who had received the protection of a spirit of earth.

I'm sorry if the comparison was bad. It's just that recently, I haven't been able to eat any home-cooking. From my human memories I remember eating stuff like cup-noodles. Junk food is also good, isn't it. But it loses to Miss Lily's homemade cooking. So much that I'd happily take her for my wife.

And above all else, eating something together with someone else makes it better.

While complaining about picking up someone with no relatives, she told me about the owner while looking very happy.

Humans are nice too, is what I earnestly felt.

Dragon Life Chapter 7

I was allowed to stay at the establishment, and when I woke up miss Lily had already made breakfast and was waiting for me.

Oops! Because of my time as a dragon, I don't have a sense of time and I ended up oversleeping.

When I wanted to sleep, I slept, when I wanted to eat, I ate, because of this idling lifestyle I can't really match the rhythm of human life.

That's slightly troublesome.

Be that as it may, the breakfast was also really good.

When I went to the place where I was supposed to be taught, what waited for me was a very large building which left me befuddled for a while. Isn't this the biggest mansion in this town? When I timidly approached the mansion, I noticed that another girl stood in front of the mansion. For several seconds she looked befuddled when looking up at the mansion in the same way I was a short while ago, so I called out to her. Apparently she also came here at miss Lily's recommendation.

She told me that her name was Chiffon, what a tasty sounding name. But she didn't seem to have any magical power, so I didn't feel like eating her... If I don't stop thinking about eating everyone I meet, it might get risky. What if I were to absentmindedly say what I was thinking.

Chiffon was shorter than I was, with dull honey-colored, fluffy hair. She wasn't healthily tanned like I was, instead having pure white skin. Her irises were also the color of honey.

Compared to amber color, it was a different, showy, dark color, but I liked it. Her shy face somehow reminded me of Saus. Uh-huh, humans and animals are different you say? You're too naive. I understand this. Let's leave it at that.

After we knocked on the door, an elderly woman with a scary face opened the door.

[You're on time. That is good.]

After she said that she smiled, and guided us inside the mansion. I wondered whether her scary face or her smiling face was her usual face, the gap between them surprised me. Chiffon told me: [That surprised me. At first I thought she was a scary person, but her smiling face is lovely, isn't it?] as she smiled. What a natural airhead.

All the vases, paintings and furniture in the room were luxurious and ornamented. A chandelier hung from the ceiling.

The last person had already come, sitting on one of three chairs that had been prepared in the room, waiting. The lady had us sit on the other two, then sat down on a chair that was in

front of the other three chairs, talking whilst looking at the papers she held in her hands.

[Ariadne Barroo, Angelina town, fifteen years old.]

[...Yes.]

So she was from this town. However, coming from Angelina town that is being controlled by the Angelina Kingdom and having Angelina as part of her name, isn't that too simple? Am I overthinking things?

Nevertheless, the fact that she has a surname means she that she should be from a fairly well off family. I wonder why she wants to work in the castle.

I stole a quick glance at miss Angelina. She had her hair arranged in a ponytail, and her hair color was a thicker blond than even miss Lily. She had blue eyes, and the corner of her eyes were slightly slanted upwards, which caused her to have a cold and not easily approached impression. But she's the same age as I am. Well, I don't really know how old I am so I simply choose something that matches with my outer appearance.

[Chiffon Quartet, Quartet Village, sixteen years old.]

[Y-, yes.]

It seemed Chiffon was one year older. She replied while looking nervous.

[Vito Vienna, Vienna village, fifteen years old.]

[Yes.]

People like I and Chiffon who don't have a surname use our village name in place of it. Those who have their own last names are those who have quite a bit of money, since apparently you need to buy it. The more unusual the name, the more expensive it is.

[Good. From here on, I'm going to give you the absolute minimum amount of etiquette that you need in order to work in the castle. Since you're going to work in the castle which is the symbol of this kingdom, I expect you to learn with a serious attitude. I want you to call me Madam. I am the personnel manager for the castle.]

[Yes, Madam] the three of us answered. The Madam looked satisfied and nodded, starting the lesson on etiquette.

* * *

The first day consisted of manners. If our backs weren't straight enough, our footsteps were too loud or if we moved our hands too much while we walked we'd get yelled at. It was better than getting whipped, but being scolded by that scary face was terrifying. To walk with pride, with your hands lightly in front of us. When walking not to forgot the etiquette of a lady. I never thought walking could be this tiring. The one she got the most scolded was

Chiffon. The more she got scolded, the weirder her walking got, and noticing that the madam didn't scold her after that. As expected of someone with the duty of managing personnel. She really is good at observing people. My performance was average, so I got averagely scolded. Ariadne was amazing. Her movements were so pretty that I ended up captivated, if she told us she was the daughter of nobility I wouldn't be surprised. Madam looked satisfied, smiling while nodding showing the terrifying difference between her scary expression.

Next we practiced how to greet others. The most basic of the basics. First we were to say where we were assigned followed by our name. Simple, but we must be able to do it without wavering in our voices. I'm glad that I did some voice training while I was a dragon, even if it was for threatening others. Chiffon's voice was originally very quiet so she seemed to be struggling. Ariadne managed to do it very tidily with a clear voice. To be born with that voice... Wait a moment, if I eat her won't I get that voice? She seems like she'd have a decent amount of magical power anyway...No, no, no, this won't do. When I'm a human I must be forget my time as a dragon. Forget, me!

The last thing we did during the first day was how to bow when meeting a person of high rank in the hallway. It was a simple bow only bending the back 45 degrees. Becoming hunchbacked and only sticking out your behind is apparently not good enough. It's apparently good enough if we raise our heads after we no longer hear their footsteps. Isn't this kind of plain and painful. It seems I need to train my abdominal muscles.

[Aaah, I'm so tired...]

When we reached our room Chiffon unsteadily walked to the bed in the middle and collapsed on it. Because she didn't seem very skilled, the one who seemed to be in the most pain was Chiffon.

I? I was very average. After using my muscles that I don't usually use, it seemed like I'll get some muscle pain tomorrow.

Apparently we were to live in one room with three people. When we arrive at the castle two people will share each room, so it seems like I will need to get used to it.

this room was quite spartan in comparison to the earlier splendid room. As expected of a room for servants. And what's more, of common birth. I don't we'll get to do anything but the most menial tasks in the castle, but what we're learning is probably the absolute minimum of what we need to know.

In the first place, the mental image I've gotten so far of those maids who take care of those with high standing, are that they are daughters of nobility who are serving as maids in order to learn the necessary skills to marry, and while doing it they are indirectly searching for their future husbands. What we commoners are made to do is simply what those daughters of nobility simply do not want to do. For example, the cleaning of the castle, laundry and carrying of heavy objects are tasks we are assigned. What we are made to wear are not the light blue apron dress that the maids are wearing, but deep blue clothes where it doesn't

matter if they get dirty. That's actually what I'm wearing right now. Chiffon looks cute while wearing it so she's happy, but, well, compared to the clothes a village girl usually wears it's even got frills so it might be considered cute. And it's sturdy. This is important.

[Chiffon, if you're going to lie down, the do it after you change your clothes. You're going to get wrinkles in your clothes.]

We were also provided with sleep-wear. Gray dresses. I who have a very flat body could wear it down to my ankles without problem. This body doesn't have very much of a figure, huh. It feels very familiar... Does that mean that when I was human I didn't have much of a figure? Could it be that it couldn't be helped, since I was japanese?

But Chiffon is different. What's with those breasts!! Just where and how did she hide them, they were so big that it looked like two melons were about to spill out and fall out from her chest. Since it seemed like she had problems wearing the sleep-wear I offered my assistance, causing her to thank me while smiling. This girl is like a marshmallow girl. Her breasts are also like marshmallows.

When we finished our sleeping preparations, Ariadne also began changing her clothes. She loosened her ponytail. Her blond hair reached her hips. Her breasts weren't as large as Chiffons, instead having just the perfect size, and the line from her breasts until her hips were like a work of art. Miss Ariadne had a sensual body like that of an adult. What's with this difference, even though we are the same age.

And just how am I looking at these two. Like this, am I not just like some lewd old man?

And more importantly, Ariadne is taller than I, isn't she. Even though I am taller than the average woman, she's tall enough that I have to look up at her.

[I know! Let's introduce ourselves again! I'm Chiffon Quartet, I came from the Quartet village to the west. The fruits from there are tasty and plentiful, so if you feel like it please visit, okay?]

She was a cute girl with a matching sweet smile. Even though her breasts are like giant marshmallows.

[Ehm, my elder sister is also working in the castle. Since I look up to my sister, it's been my dream to someday work in the castle, too. Then I coincidentally heard that miss Lily was recruiting servants, so I thought it was my chance!]

A nice girl who thinks of her elder sister. It almost makes me want to cry. Even though her breasts are like giant marshmallows.

[Ariadne-chan, would you mind?]

Ah, so she's asking miss Ariadne first. I didn't expect that miss Ariadne would be like me and be slightly bewildered, but she opened her mouth.

[I'm... That is...]

It seemed difficult to articulate so she averted her eyes. It seems like she has her own circumstances.

[That is?]

Oh shit, Chiffon is the type who can't read the atmosphere.

[Ehrm, I am, uh...]

I decided to give her a helping hand.

[You know of the Vizannu mountain close to Vienna village, right?]

If I was strangely silent here it would be odd, right? I decided to tell the same story I told to miss Lily.

[Ah, I know! It's the mountain where the man-eating dragon lives!]

Chiffon took my bait. I'm happy but has the rumor about the man-eating dragon spread this far? Like this it might be really hard to return to my dragon form.

Miss Ariadne also seemed to have an interest in the talk about the dragon, as she stole a glance in my direction.

[Yes, there were several people in the village who fell victim to it, so dad and mom told me that it was dangerous to stay in that village and had me go here to this town. A lot of mercenaries also came to the village and stayed over, but they were all people with no manners. Apparently they were dangerous for a young girl like me.]

I didn't tell miss Lily about the mercenaries. Because the subjugation parties in the beginning were a mish-mash collection, their manners were all very bad. When they entered the forest they teased the animals and threw trash everywhere. In the end I witnessed them trying to rape a young girl who had become lost, so I snapped and turned them all into charcoal. I think that humans can do both good and evil deeds. That's true even when I am a dragon. I eat humans because I want to live. That's why I kill humans without hesitation, because otherwise I can't keep my own life. But those people captured an unrelated young girl. Just recalling it makes me incredibly angry. I wonder if turning them into charcoal was too light a punishment. But because I burnt them to the bone, they will become good nutrition for the mountain, so it's fine I guess.

[There sure are some savage people, huh... They're scarier than the dragon. You did the right thing by leaving your village!]

Hearing that gave me some complicated feelings, but I felt happy at the same time.

After that we fooled around for a while, but since she suddenly went out like a candle,

Chiffon might have reached her peak. Covered by her sheet, we could hear her breathing. How surprisingly charming.

I decided to also sleep, so I slipped under my closeby sheet.

I said goodnight to Ariadne, but she seemed to be thinking about something so she stayed up for a while longer.

Aah, it seems I'm reaching my limits, too.

The sandman attacked me shortly after that, and I fell asleep.

* * *

The second day, we began by reviewing what we learned the day before and in the afternoon we went over what we needed to learn in order to do our jobs. We had to study so many things that I felt my head was about to explode. So there were etiquette when doing work. I never knew that...

The third day started with a review of the first day, and in the afternoon we studied common knowledge. This surprised me. Since I don't know what the common sense is around here, I couldn't answer at all. But for the detailed knowledge, I could answer. This is probably in part thanks to Rau. Madam looked at me with curiosity, but I managed to dodge the issue with a laugh. HAHAAHA.

The fourth day we took a break by studying how to brew tea. We will almost never do this job, but there is no disadvantage in the knowledge so we had delicious tea with cakes. Unexpectedly, Chiffon was the best at this, which surprised me. Apparently she loved cakes and tea back in her village, so she had become proficient at preparing both. Even Madam was surprised at this.

The fifth day was the last day, and we repeated everything we'd learned for the Madam to see. Ariadne splendidly managed to succeed on her first try. I failed a few times but managed to receive approval. Chiffon was repeatedly nervous, so she failed around ten times, but somehow managed to succeed which made her really happy. Thus the three of us succeeded. I heard that tomorrow we will be moving out to start working in the castle.

This is the last time we'll be in this room, which is kind of sad. The three of us will be assigned quarters close to each other, but we might end up in different rooms.

Chiffon went to sleep first, and when I was about to sleep as well and had just slipped into the bed, Ariadne called my name.

[Vito.]

I might be late in saying this, but the truth is that these last days we had grown close enough to call each other by first name. Chiffon likes to add chan to our names, but she's the only one doing that.

I got up from the bed and looked at the girl who sat on the bed behind Chiffons bed. She looked deep in thought when she looked at me, her ponytail still untied.

[What is it, Ariadne?]

[That is... You told me you were from Vienna village, right? There's one thing I'd like to ask you.]

When I nodded, Ariadne steeled herself and opened her mouth.

[I have a young sister. At the moment she is bedridden with a sickness though.]

That is a serious matter. Since She's Ariadne's sister she's probably very lovely. But I wonder why she's bedridden. I don't get the reason why she told me that either, but I won't be able to say anything without listening to her. I simply kept quiet and listened to her story.

[It happened several weeks ago when we were on a trip to our grandmothers place. I carelessly took my eyes off her for a moment, and she disappeared. I desperately searched for her, but I couldn't find her after I don't know how many hours. But the next morning, I found her. That is, in the middle of a forest at the foot of the Vizenna mountain... She was so emaciated that it stung my heart. She was so covered in wounds and mud that she was painful to look at, her face was pale blue and she was incoherently muttering..."The dragon".]

I was startled.

Among the humans I've met so far, none have been able to escape. Because before they manage to escape, I have either eaten them or killed them. But I overlooked one of them, a single girl. Since she was fainted I didn't think she saw me, it seems she saw me.

Could it be that that girl was——

[That was the first time I heard the rumor of the man-eating dragon. And all this time I thought that the reason my sister was bedridden with a sickness was because of that dragon. The whole time, the whole time, until now I've hated that dragon.]

Ariadne smiled, the sadness apparent on her expression.

[The reason that I decided to work at the castle, is also for the sake of my sister. My parents run a shop intended for nobles, but it seems that those earnings alone won't be enough to cure my sister. That's why I went to miss Lily's establishment, wondering if there wasn't anything I could do to help. And then I was referred to this job.]

I wonder if this sickness she's suffering, is a sickness of the heart.

She didn't tell that much.

[... That's when, I heard Vito's story some days ago and became to doubt.]

The talk from the first day, I guess?

[That time, you said that the subjugation parties were filled with bad people, didn't you?]

[...Yes.]

[...There were several bruises on my sister's body. But they were the size of an adult's fist. There's no way they were the work of a giant dragon... Could it be that my sister wasn't attacked by the dragon, but the mercenaries... Thinking that made me mortified. That humans who were supposed to be my allies, had caused a wound on the heart of my sister.]

Could the reason why Ariadne seemed down lately be because she was thinking about this?

Could it be that she was constantly reminded of the small mistake she did that one day, and always troubled by it?

[I've no longer know. In what should I believe?]

She had probably hated the dragon until now. Then when she heard what I said, she came to realize that those she thought were her allies could be the very ones who perpetrated the deed which caused her to become perplexed.

It seems that what I told Ariadne caused her to worry, huh. With that knowledge, what I should say is... I should probably not say anything.

I can't say anything that would cause her to feel better. But, if she's lost because of my words.

[Ariadne, you don't have to force yourself to believe in anything. If you find something that you find worthy of your belief, then it's fine to believe in that.]

I think that her sister really was assaulted by the mercenaries. But I can't say that to her. I can't prove it, and I can't confess that I am that dragon.

[I think what happened to your sister is unfortunate. But there would be no meaning if because of that, you also lost your heart. It would certainly make your sister sad as well. If she was attacked by the dragon, or attacked by the mercenaries, I can't tell that... But you will certainly find the answer one day.]

More than that, you should focus on working hard in the castle for the sake of your sister, right? If you can't come up with an answer, then there's no point in thinking about it.

I don't know how to encourage her, but by saying that and including my feelings as much as I could, Ariadne muttered weakly [That's true.], but she still smiled.

Regarding the talk about her sister, I couldn't do anything but evade.

Dragon Life Chapter 8

The inside of the castle was quite splendid. It was filled to the brim with extravagant ornamentation, and it was too extravagant, so much that my eyes hurt. Chiffons eyes were sparkling, and she kept going [Wow!]. Ariadne was as cool headed as always while watching the insides of the castle.

The Madam returned after a short while. Following her were a woman dressed in the same type of clothes we were.

[Your job is going to be to clean the inside of the castle. This person is going to be your manager so make sure to listen to what she says.]

[Well met, all of you. I am the one managing the cleaning inside the castle, and my name is Milena. I look forward to working with you three.]

With light brown hair arranged in a ball behind her and orange irises, she was a kind-looking woman in the second half of her thirties. Cleaning the inside of the castle, laundry or garden work were also managed by her, but as expected we would only be allowed the most basic of jobs in the beginning. After we introduced ourselves in turn, we were immediately guided towards our rooms.

On the way she taught us various things. The inside of the castle were complex, so we had to quickly remember the way. That when encountering persons of a high social standing we must bow. The persons of high social standing here were royalty and nobles. I had the mental image that inside the castle there were only royalty, but apparently nobles could simply petition and they would be allocated rooms in the castle if any where free. Right now twenty noble families lived here is what I heard. Just how huge is this castle? It seems the simple fact of living inside the castle is considered as status. I'd hate it. I mean, wouldn't living close to royalty be stifling?

We were also taught that we should be punctual with our times.

We were under no circumstances to leave our rooms after nine o'clock in the evening.

We should as much as possible avoid causing any disturbance that would lead to an uproar.

And lastly, that each month we would have a few days off.

In short, perform your work as if you were air! is what she meant. I understand. I personally don't want to do anything that really stands out, and as long as I get what I need to live and a decent salary, I won't easily let go of this job. If there is anything that worries me, then it is how to handle my eating as a dragon, but right now I'm still not very hungry, so it's fine for now. Before I left the mountain, I made sure to stuff myself just in case.

When necessary it would probably be fine to take leave for a day and fly away to somewhere far away to resupply. I can fly, after all.

I ended up in the same room as Chiffon. Ariadne ended up alone in the room adjacent to ours. Originally the number of servants was supposed to be even, so that's probably how it ended up with this arrangement.

That's so nice, having your own room. I'll make sure to visit.

The rest of the day was spent with Milena who told us where we would be working and other information. On the way, we met with a noble for the first time, so we bowed like we were told until he had passed. My back ached from muscle pain.

At first I was nervous, but when I began to work I realized that the time we were working and the time the nobles were active didn't really overlap so I hardly got to meet them.

But the one time I happened to encounter royalty really surprised me. He was only a young prince, but I felt that they had really taken advantage of everything when raising him.

But that's not the important point. The auras of nobles and royalty is terrific. I'm sure they keep their marriages within their relatives to keep their blood pure. Their magical power were astounding. So delicious... Oh no, although it's fine as long as I don't go berserk.

So far I haven't met anyone that looked so delicious that they caused me to rampage. If such a person existed I'm going to make sure that I can taste them. Without question, eating them. Even if not immediately, I'm going to wait for my chance.

My job was as follow.

When neither nobility nor royalty were active, to clean the hallways and stairs of the castle. The stairs are amazing. Spiral staircases and ones that looked like they belonged in theatres were everywhere, so the cleaning was quite a hurdle. My seniors were also complaining while cleaning. Since they also were of common birth, I could easily talk with them which was a blessing.

But meeting the maids of noble birth gave me a bad feeling. Because they looked at us as if we were some sort of vermin. Not all of them were like that, and some even gave us cakes though.

It's that, women desperate to find a husband are scary. They see everyone as enemies. And what's more, when their chosen noble or royalty appeared they would instantly change their face into a smiling face and try to curry favor... Women are scary!

I don't want to get involved in their fighting. For them, love is something like a job, making me wonder from what era they came from, but sadly this was a daily occurrence. I couldn't stand quarrel between women in particular. One early morning in front of a certain room, I was surprised when a classy looking lady ran out of it only her panties. What surprised me even more was when another woman, stark naked with a red face came out of the room and began to chase her. Even though I thought that women of this world didn't particularly enjoy showing skin. Struggling with such a desperate expression, I wondered just who the man they were fighting over were, but the man in question was actually kind of dull. His

clothing and social position was good, but his face was very average. As expected, it's because of his social standing. I see.

Miss Milena told us to act as if we didn't see it. Being told that made me smile and feel peace of mind. It seems Chiffon is starting to develop a phobia to love, so mom is getting worried... No, I only wanted to try saying that. When things like this kept happening, we grew used to it whether we liked it or not. Right now we say [Ah, again huh-] while smiling bitterly when talking to our seniors while trying to ignore it.

After the morning job I ate a late breakfast whereafter I was to clean windows in the corridor while being as invisible as possible. After that I earn a small break. What a lifestyle without any wants! I can't complain about the money that I receive either. After I've saved up money, I think I'll move somewhere far from here. Build a cabin in the middle of a forest and live together with Saus, Rau and Whitey, oh what a peaceful existence that would be.

Even I had moments where I thought like that.

It's been about half a year since I began working in the castle. As for my food, I simply changed back into a dragon and flew some place far away when I got hungry.

Today I had the roll-call duty, so after collecting everyone's presence I had just arrived outside Milena's office, but for some reason there was a busy atmosphere inside.

[This is no good. There's no girl who could adapt to that place. What should we do?]

[I thought that if it was her she would be able to continue though... I have no excuse. It seems that my personnel decisions were wrong.]

[No, it's not your responsibility. I believe you have done as well as you could. And furthermore, they are only young women, so they could probably not stand it. It's something that couldn't be helped.]

Miss Milena and the Madam looked troubled as they sighed.

THinking that I shouldn't disturb them, I timidly say [Excuse me-...] and close the door behind me, when I completely catch Madam's eye.

Milena also noticed and looked in my direction.

Oh, is this Deja vu?

[Ah, could it be that you came with the roll-call?]

[Yes, I've collected everyone's roll-call and came to report.]

[Thank you very much for you work. Please make sure everyone is working.]

As I was about to say yes, of course and exit, Madam stopped me.

[Vito Vienna. I have something I'd like to ask of you.]

Upon hearing these words, not only I but also Milena was shocked, saying [Madam!?!]. Aah, I've got a bad feeling about this.

[Wh-, what could it be?]

[The thing is that the servant in charge of the fourth knight corps dormitory has suddenly resigned. We must by any means find someone to take over her duties, but regrettably we can't find anyone suitable.]

And you want me to do that? That's what you're saying, isn't it, Madam? I understand it very well. Once you're caught by her scary face, it's almost like you're a frog stared at by a snake.

Damn it, in this case isn't it a dragon stared at by a snake?

[Still, Vito is still in training. I don't know if we can trust her with it...]

[It's fine, Milena. This girl can do anything averagely. She doesn't excel in anything, but she's good at riding with the tide.]

Are you implying that I'm good with my hands but in the end won't amount to anything? I don't know if you're praising me or speaking badly of me...

[Eeh, that is... She suddenly decided to resign?]

Isn't being in charge of a dormitory of knights one of the most sought after positions? Chiffon's sister is in charge of the first knight corps dormitory and she is admired for that, and the knights who protect the kingdom are, even among the servants, able to evoke shrill shrieks.

There's even a rumor that the girl in charge of the third knight corps dormitory managed to get together with one of the knights. Yet, with all that, why did she resign? Something must have happened or this doesn't make any sense.

The Madam sighed softly.

[Even if we try to hide it at first, it won't matter. I'll be frank. The girls assigned to the fourth knight corps dormitory resign one after another. The girls of the first, second and third knight corps dorms are doing fine, but people like them who are good at adapting are quite rare. That's why the assignment at the fourth knight corps dorm is constantly getting replaced.]

[What's the reason why they resign?]

When talking about a knight corps dorm, what comes to mind is bored knights and soldiers, and being the only girl working in that condition is certainly rigorous. And for a young maiden, the burden is even greater.

[I'll tell you what, that is... Truthfully speaking, it's the stench of sweat.]

Eh?

[You see, they are training every day in order to better serve the kingdom, and in addition, the fourth knight corps are solely consisting of dragon riders. They wear different armors compared to the other knights in order to ride the dragons, and especially at this time, their armors can become were stuffy.]

In short, I'm to clean this filthy dormitory. The knights clean the dining hall, the bath and their own rooms, but the windows, floors and the lounge are cleaned by servants sent by the Madam. It's not as big as the castle, but cleaning their dormitory while they temper their bodies day in and day out seems like quite a burden.

[Ehm, must one do this job by themselves?]

I had a question. If the job was that painful, wouldn't it be better to send more people?

[We once sent three people to do it. But they resigned even quicker than the people who were sent in alone.]

[When one says they want to quit the others follow. If that continues, then no matter how many helpers we have here, it won't be enough.]

Aah, one of them says [Hey, I can't take this anymore. Let's quit.] [Eh, but I've finally managed to get a work inside the castle.] [... Truth is, I'm also at my limits.] [... That's true, it seems that quitting might be for the best anyway.] and this pattern appears. If you have someone to discuss with, you make choices quicker. But if you're alone, you doubt if it's really for the best to quit and you end up staying slightly longer.... In the end, they both quit, huh.

[If you think it's impossible I won't prevent you from returning here. I don't want to lose my personnel who I have gathered with great trouble unnecessarily. But please wait until the next assigned person has been decided is all I ask. Since it's so sudden we're also feeling lost.]

What! That Madam actually asked a favor of me!

Said like that my spirit as a japanese person won't allow me to decline, or it could perhaps be because I'm too softhearted. Nay, the truth is that I'm very interested in these existences known as dragon riders. Some time ago I saw some humans riding dragons in the skies. Perhaps they were that type of people. If I'm assigned there, could it be that I will be able to get glimpses of dragons? Truth is, I've never met a dragon other than myself. I'm quite curious.

Concerning the smell of sweat, well, I'm also concerned with that. But the fact that washing their clothes is not part of my duties makes that slightly better.

That why I nodded towards the Madam's words.

Wait just one moment. Rather than emergency personnel, I'm more like an emergency dragon?

Dragon Life Chapter 9

It's been decided that I'm to be assigned to the fourth knight corps dormitory, but formally I will be assigned to work under the fourth knight corps captain. And I heard that the captain here is quite the odd person.

The work schedule I received from the Madam is like this:

Early in the morning I am to wake the captain. It's already strange at this point, isn't it. It's not like I'm a maid, what is he making a cleaning servant do? The captain is apparently an incredibly bad morning person, so if I fail to wake him up, after a while the lieutenant will come and finally wake him up. What a troublesome person. After seeing him off, I am to clean his room and the lieutenant's room next door. While they are eating breakfast, I am to finish cleaning, then go to the dining hall myself and eat a light breakfast.

How I'm going to clean after that is mostly left to me. Sweeping the hallways, washing the windows, dusting off the lounge and the ornaments.

Doing all of that alone will take quite some time, but how much time I use doesn't really matter from what I've heard. It seems I have to return to my room before it turns dark. Night is apparently when they're merrymaking, so being a lone girl there would be dangerous. How thrilling. I will eat them before they eat me, though. Ah, but if I do that, I can no longer stay in the castle, huh. Let's be careful.

Anyway, I've been told the important points and what I need to do.

Now I'm headed towards the dorm. The cleaning tools are inside the dorm, so I'm arriving barehanded. The only thing I bring is resolution. I'm so cool.

I'm walking inside the castle as I've been taught, with the dorm as my goal. It's quite some distance farther than where I usually work, so I'm slightly worried, but when I see the dorm I feel at ease.

The four dorms are quite large. The area the dorms are occupying, isn't it larger than the castle itself? It's probably because they're knights. When thinking of knights, what I heard is that there are both those of common birth like me, and those of noble birth.

Anyway, the dorm to the far right is the fourth knight corps' dorm. A huge number 4 is written in the middle of the dorm and that's how I came to find it. They're probably still asleep, since the surroundings were deathly silent. When I opened the door, the entrance hall appeared behind it. If I continue in that direction, I'll reach the lounge. The huge lounge door was open. If I remember correctly, the captain was living in a corner on the fourth floor. I climbed the staircase until I reached the fourth floor and went for the room at the end of the hallway. The second and third floor is where the other knights are staying. The first floor is where the public facilities, like the dining hall and the bath are. When I arrived at the captain's room, I took out the key I'd been given and slowly put it inside the lock, turning the key. With a clink, the lock snapped open. Feeling slightly nervous I opened the door, and

the first thing I saw inside the room was a large desk. When I looked at the surroundings, I discovered that it was a refined, simple workroom. Lots of books were crammed into the bookshelves and lots of papers were on the desk. It seemed to be disorderly, yet it wasn't. What a mysterious room.

The bedroom was in the room to the right. This room wasn't locked, so I could enter easily.

What should I do if he's scary? If it's a gross, middle-aged man, what should I do (I'm sorry)? My heart is pounding in my ears.

While saying 'excuse me' in a tiny voice, I enter the room and close the door.

A large bed is placed in the middle of the room, and the shape of a human can be seen, bulging from the sheet. He's asleep, as expected. I wonder if it's really okay to wake him.

The weather is good, so I guess I'll start with opening the windows. Passing the bed, I unfolded the curtains, unfastened the metal fittings and opened the window. It seems like I can reach the balcony from here. I could see some kind of gray building from the balcony. It seemed to be some kind of stables, but it was heavily fortified and even under guard. Could this be where they kept the dragons?

I'm extremely curious.

But waking the captain takes precedence.

I took a deep breath of the outside air, resolving myself as I moved closer to the captain's bed. As I timidly looked at his head, I couldn't see his face since he was facing another direction, but his long bright-green hair was flowing on the sheet.

For an instant I thought he was a woman, but thinking that there's no way that there's a woman here, I gently reached out towards his shoulder.

[Captain.]

Come to think of it, since I was in a hurry, I didn't even get to hear his name from the Madam. I'm not really troubled by it, though.

I shook his shoulder, but his regular sleeping breath didn't change at all.

[Captain, captain.]

This time I tried to shake him as hard as possible. But it didn't work either.

It seems that what the Madam said earlier was true.

This is a job where you need to break some bones. I wish the lieutenant arrives soon.

[Captaaaaain! C, a, p, t, a, i, n!... Ahoy captain! It's a trap!]

I tried various things, but none had any effect at all. I guess the captain is one of the reasons why the servants keep quitting.

After trying to wake him for twenty minutes, he didn't show any signs of rising, so I decided to rest, absolutely astonished. That he didn't wake up even when I arbitrarily decided to sit on his bed was the last of it. This really is a good bed. I want to try sleeping in a bed as fluffy as this one. Nevertheless, just how am I supposed to wake him?

[I guess I'll turn into a dragon and trample him?]

If I did that, even this captain might wake up. What a stupid thing to mutter.

My left arm was suddenly grabbed by something.

———Eh?

Since the movement was sluggish, if I had wanted to avoid it, I could have, but since I was startled I stiffened.

Just who is gripping my arm?

The answer is simple. The only ones here right now are me and the captain.

The one who grabbed my arm is without question the captain.

While rubbing my eyes, I slowly lifted my body from the bed, which caused the sheet to slip off from his body. His long hair was undulating across the bed, flowing like a gentle wave. Because his long bangs blocked the view, I couldn't see his eyes, but his straight nose bridge and his milk pure skin made me realize that he was younger than I had thought he'd be.

Since he was called captain, I had the image of a middle-aged uncle, but there's no way this man has passed the age of thirty. Rather, he looks to be in the lower twenties.

The hand that grabbed my arm, was less masculine and instead rather feminine. But it seem this person indeed has been training, since his palm was hard.

And what I wanted to say above all was:

———This person, looks so bloody delicious.

If I by any chance returned to dragon-form here, I might just eat him here and now. Without thinking, by instinct.

From the ends of his flowing bright green hair to the nails on his toes, everything is so fascinating that I wouldn't have been able to help myself.

My heart was throbbing as if I was a lovestruck maiden. I wonder if you can understand the feeling of finding a top class food before your eyes.

He looked so much more delicious than any other human I'd ever seen, it almost destroyed all my reason.

I don't know. I don't know what expression I should be making as I have these feelings.

But, one thing is absolutely certain.

— — — One day, I'm going to eat him, without question.

I'm going to taste him as I eat him. But only eating him once would be a waste. I'm going to eat him over the course of several days. Or rather, I want to split him into parts and preserve him. No, eating him resolutely in one gulp would be best. No, no, no, that would be too much of a waste. First I'd eat his limbs one by one, followed by his trunk. Or should I start with the head? Even wasting one drop of blood would be a waste, so maybe I should eat him after bleeding him out? Leaving him alive for a while and only sucking his blood is also viable. Absolutely viable. No objection.

Oh no, I'm drooling.

As the battle in my mind was raging between reason and instincts, the captain rose up, of course dragging my arm with him.

[...?]

That's when he finally seemed to notice my presence, as he curiously glanced at the arm he was grabbing and then looked in my direction. Then he slowly tilted his head in confusion.

That's right. Here. Here is where I'm supposed to introduce myself. If I escape now he's surely going to think that I'm a suspicious person!

That I think he looks delicious might be exposed. I'm not drooling right now, am I?

My left arm was hanging in the air in a strange posture, but without hurry or panic I introduced myself.

[...I'm the servant Vito Vienna, who from today onwards, will be in charge of this fourth knight corps dormitory. I might be inexperienced, but please treat me with care.]

As I said that, the captain let go of my arm.

[Changing again, huh.]

His voice didn't betray an ounce of interest. It's probably because of that, that the rate of change for the servants here is so extreme.

The captain stifled a yawn while he remained seated on the bed. Maybe because he still was drowsy, but his movements were awkward, but he reached for a tiny drawer and withdrew three things that looked like hairbands. Combing his long hair with his fingers, he then proceeded to part it into three, whereafter he started to braid his hair skillfully.

Ah, this person has his hair braided.

I finally realized. The braided person I sometimes spot in the castle, is without question this man.

Since the hair was long and braided, and the person's figure was slender, I thought that it was a woman without question, but when I asked Chiffon she told me [That person is a knight, so it's a man, okay?]. When I looked more closely, I noticed that he seemed to be wearing a pure white military uniform.

When I noticed him in the castle, I would take a closer look. The reason for that is probably because of his hair. Because of his three part braided hair.

The first time I saw it I thought it was extremely unruly hair, but when I looked closer, I realized that the braid would probably be able to reach his waist, and that it was parted three ways from behind each ear and from the back of his head, and that it was braided. I've seen two-part and single braided hair before, but I've never seen a three-part braid so I thought it was curious which might be the reason why I kept looking for him.

Thus, every time I found him, I whispered 'The braided person' in my mind. To grow hair of this length would probably take quite some time. I've never seen a woman with hair this long, much less a man. And the fact that it actually suits him truly is a mystery.

While in those thoughts, the captain skillfully laid down again to sleep. It seemed like he still was sleepy, but the two hands he'd used to braid his hair were still in his hair.

While wondering what his deal was, I sighed. I called out [Captain.] several times, but as expected he didn't budge.

If you're this defenseless, I might really eat you, hey!

With no choice, I once again commenced shaking his shoulders.

[Captain, captain, you're only halfway done with your braids! Is that really fine? I mean, if you comb it with your fingers, it'll hurt, you know! Even though you have a comb...]

Before, I only got a glance, but inside that small drawer there was a very feminine looking comb. Even though a comb is for combing hair, to not use it is a waste!

And even though it was decorated simply, it was gorgeous. I wonder if he got it as a present from someone.

As I shook him, the captain finally stirred.

My relief lasted but a moment, as he reached his hand inside the drawer and handed me the comb. Moreover, he also gave me the earlier hairbands... Could it be that he wants me to comb it? Or wait, he heard what I said? Even though I thought he was sleeping.

To do it while standing is difficult, but it seems I've got no choice but to do it, huh. It's the first time I've ever touched the hair of a man. As I combed his long hair, I got the urge to scream "Just how well has this hair been maintained!" because of how easy it was to comb.

My current hair is, frankly speaking, quite stiff. For that reason I always kept my hair bound in two balls. That's why I was envious.

But this silky long hair, just what is it. If the women of the world saw it, they would envy it for sure.

As I was mostly done combing the hair, I spread it in three, making sure not to have them entangled in each other as I began braiding them. Long hair can easily get entwined at the hair ends. Besides, I really had to take care when braiding his hair or chances were it'd look stupid.

Whilst taking care of braiding the three parts, I thought that my work turned out well, if I may say so. This is the first time I've braided such a long hair. I've got a strange sense of accomplishment.

[Captain, I'm finished.]

It seemed he was still drowsy, as he simply nodded. As I nodded at the braid I'd made, feeling satisfied, he finally rose.

Whoa, he's tall.

Since I've only seen him from afar, isn't he easily over twenty centimeters taller than I am? It seems that the men of this world are quite tall on average. I wonder why. Since I'm only working in places filled with women, sometimes when a man stands near me I get a fright. Mr. Roi was quite short though, so he didn't surprise me very much.

The captain seemed like he wanted to change his clothes, as he walked towards the closet.

What am I supposed to do?

Oh, I get it. He's telling me to attack him from behind, I understand... Nah, no way, huh.

While having such pointless thoughts, someone knocked the door. Seeming to know that no answer would be coming, the person quickly entered the room. When the person saw the captain standing in the closet, he was startled.

[It's very unusual for captain Luu to be up and about at this time.]

I startled him.

Could this person be the lieutenant? From one glance I saw that he had a visage that would make kids cry. His figure was so tall that he almost couldn't fit in the door and his scary face, if he said that he was going to kill ten people right now, it wouldn't feel strange. His voice

was also low, with a threatening quality.

What he was wearing however was a military uniform and he had a sword hanging at his side.

The lieutenant scowled in my direction. He probably didn't actually scowl at me, but that was how it felt. Scary.

[Are you a new person?]

[Yes. I'm known as Vito Vienna.

[Miss Vito, there's one thing I'd like to ask. Just how did you manage to make captain Luu wake up?]

Even if you say that. I simply jolted his shoulders. When I told that to the lieutenant, he cocked his head to the side, puzzled.

[That's strange. Captain Luu usually won't wake up, no matter what.]

[Usually, you say?]

[Ah, that's right. Before a battle or the days we're practicing flying, he gets up early, like today.]

I asked if today was one of those days, but apparently the schedule for today was the usual training.

[I'm sorry for having delayed naming myself. I am the lieutenant of the fourth knight corps, Adolf Defoe.]

As I once again introduced myself, the lieutenant once again explained the contents of the job I already heard from the Madam. As it seemed that he had difficulty explaining the circumstances of the last girl, I smiled to reassure him.

[It's okay. I've heard everything from the Madam. I'm going to do everything in my power when working here, so please take care of me.]

[Is, is that so. That's reassuring. But please don't be unreasonable. Suddenly quitting without talking with us is troubling for us as well, you see.]

That's very troublesome, isn't it. However, the suddenly quitting girls were probably driven into a corner. Just how difficult is this job?... It seems like I have to prepare myself for the worst.

The lieutenant told me that he looked forward to working with me, then left the room.

It seemed like I didn't need to mind the captain, who was changing behind me. But hey, I care, for the time being I'm a maiden.

The captain simply changed into his usual uniform, then, without doing anything else, left the room.

He still seemed sleepy, will he really be alright?

Anyhow, with no one else here I looked over the bedroom. It wasn't particularly disordered, so it seemed fine if I simply made the bed and dusted the room. I didn't really know what I should do with the scattered papers in the workroom, so I avoided them as I cleaned.

When that was done, I went over to the lieutenant's room. When I entered and looked around his room, I saw that it was neat and tidy, not matching with his appearance.

It was so neat that I really didn't have to do anything. But, a job is a job, so I did what I came for.

When I was done with cleaning their rooms, it was finally time for breakfast. As I was walking along the corridor, I looked out a window and saw men in uniform moving somewhere away from the dorm. It's probably a drill. Which means this dorm is now vacant.

When I arrived at the dining hall on the first floor, the chef beckoned me. He was a man, old enough to be my grandfather.

[Are you the new girl?]

[Yes, I am known as Vito Vienna. Please treat me well.]

[I'm called Nasso. Call me what you like.]

Mr Nasso rubbed his shaggy beard as he chuckled. He was an older man who looked good while laughing.

I was pressed down on a chair where my breakfast already was prepared. Fresh bread and a hearty soup, together with a salad and some meat. Meat first thing in the morning. Eating enough protein is important. It was slightly too much, but it was really tasty so I ate it all.

[You eat quite well, even with that thin body.]

[I should probably hold back a little, huh...]

But it was tasty. If something is tasty, I eat it all. That is my policy. It won't actually give me any energy, though.

Mr Nasso laughed splendidly and hit me on my shoulder. It hurt slightly.

[To eat a lot is good! The girl's till now haven't been eating enough, only eating about half of what you ate.]

[Eh, is that so?]

Now that I think about it, Chiffon and Ariadne didn't really eat anything when compared to me. Could it be that I am a large eater?

I'm not eating as much as Saus, though...

[I wanted to know how much food I should prepare for you, but seeing how much you ate I should be able to give you the same amount I give to everyone else and you will make short work of it.]

That's impossible even for me-, is what I wanted to say but when I'm in the mood to eat something, I'm scary.

Dragon Life Chapter 10

It's been a few days since I was assigned to the fourth dorm.

During these days, I've realized the reason why the girls kept quitting.

As expected, it was the smell. The special smell of sweaty men. Speaking badly about it, I'd say it's the smell of middle aged men, but since this dorm generally houses men between the ages of ten and forty years old, I guess it can't be helped. Besides, for them loitering around inside the dorm after returning from training whilst dripping with sweat seemed to be the usual for them, and they didn't even seem to notice their own smell.

But for a young maiden, a small problem persists. They're all used to it, but being in this large crowd of men day in and day out doing one's job, in one way could be considered a form of hell. Or would it be terror that they felt?

But since I had daily training inside cramped trains, it doesn't really affect me as much. (It seems like I was an university student.) With the smell of the sachet I received as a farewell gift from Chiffon that I have hanging from my neck, the smell is even less of an issue.

I don't have any fear of men either. Just who do you think I am? I'm not human. If they were to do anything, then trampling them and wrecking the dorm would be an easy task! I don't know how much of a struggle I will be able to put against trained knights, but after rampaging for a while, I should at the very least be able to escape.

At that time, I'm going to make sure I can gobble up the captain.

Slurp. Oh no, I'm drooling.

Today as always I worked hard at cleaning, but recently I've been troubled by piercing stares.

And the only time I feel them is when I clean the windows of the hallway. It's probably because that's the only position I can be seen from the lounge, and since someone keeps staring at me, it makes it incredibly hard to concentrate on my work.

I felt the same piercing gaze as I cleaned today as well. Since I wanted to spend my days without attracting any attention, I won't fish for trouble needlessly. But since I was bothered by it, what the hell. If this continues I won't be able to work, anyway.

After finishing wiping the windows, I turned my face to look behind me. Of course, in the direction I felt the gaze.

There was a group sitting on the couches in the lounge. I don't know if they were taking a breather after the training, but they were grinning at each other while saying something. One of them rose from the couch and starting walking towards me.

Dammit, I shouldn't have looked behind my shoulder!

The fiery redhead soon stood in front of me. Because he was tall, I had to look up at him. His upward slanting eyes were light brown, and sent me a vicious glare. How repulsive. The way he is dressed in a loose shirt makes me strangely think of a womanizer.

[Hey, are you the new kid? This stud before you is the great Stefano Duran, there's no loss in remembering my name, hey?]

[I see...]

[Hey ,hey, I gave you my name, so you have to return the favor! Or am I not good enough for you?]

What's with this feeling of being made fun of. Hey! Sistah! How about hanging with me? Oh, you're still a lil' chick, too bad, HAHAAHAHAHA!! -sort of impression.

[My name is Vito Vienna.]

[Lil' Vito huh, I'll make sure to remember that. I'm looking forward to how long you will last. Do your best to amuse us, 'kay?]

I wonder what he's implying. As I was mulling over that thought, another voice called over from nearby.

[Stefano, are you making passes at the serving girl again?]

A young man with looks that make the older women of the world swoon had approached. I wonder if calling him a madam-killer would be appropriate. Oh, not that Madam!

With clear light-blue hair bound in a horsetail and eyes of the same color, he looked at mr Stefano with an incredulous look. Light blue is usually seen as a cold color, but his voice was so gentle that he didn't give that impression at all.

Mr Stefano grimaced, as if he thought that an annoying person had shown up. Could it be that they are natural enemies? That's nice, having a rival relationship in the knight dorms. Trying to become stronger than their enemy, they struggle, and before they know it their animosity turns into friendship... just what am I thinking? Even though I want to escape from reality... I must get a hold of myself.

[We were betting over how long she'll last until she leaves. The ladies seem to really dislike working here, after all.]

[If you tell that to the person in question, won't it cease being a bet?]

As I honestly said what I thought, Stefano laughed, agreeing.

[You were miss Vito if I'm not mistaken. You don't have to worry about what this fellow says. The time you'd spend worrying would be wasted.]

He moved in front of me as if he'd shield me from mr Stefano. They really are tall. He's not

as tall as mr Stefano, but this person is also really tall. And they both seem really tasty... Oops, I ended up thinking as a dragon again. Yup, I can't really help it. Mr Stefano is quite blessed by the spirits of fire, while the madam-killer young man seems to be blessed by the spirits of water. I heard that you can tell what spirits some people are blessed by from their haircolors.

In that case, is the captain blessed by the wind? But people blessed by wind have a more deep green color. Oh well, it doesn't change the fact that he seems tasty!

As I was thinking about that, the two of them had started a small scuffle, and it reminded me of Whitey and Rau.

[That's quite rude of you, Rance.]

[If you think so, then reflect on your daily attitude and conduct.]

[Yes, yes, I get it, see ya later, lil' Vito.]

Am I going to encounter him again? Well, if I stay here I'll meet him whether I want to or not.

Mr Stefano returned to the lounge whilst cursing.

[Ehm, thank you very much.]

[Don't mind it. Rather than that, sorry, that guy is always like that. Be careful that he doesn't try to mess with you again.]

His reassuring smile was so beautiful that I couldn't look him in the eyes. Whatever the case, mr Stefano is also quite handsome, and while he doesn't seem as tasty as the captain, he's still quite the appetizer... Oh no, I keep returning to those thoughts. Even though I decided to try not to think about it.

[I haven't introduced myself yet, my name is Rance LeClair. I'm entrusted with the first platoon of the fourth knight corps.]

Oh, he's a platoon leader, that's quite stylish.

After that mr Rance taught me how I should handle the knights around here. There exists those who'd talk with me with good intentions, as well as those who wants to poke fun at me as that mr Stefano from earlier. Since there are no women, there are also those who'd assault me, so he told me to take care.

Well, in this matter I'm safe.

Before I'm eaten, I'll simply eat them myself. In a literal meaning.

After all, everyone here looks tasty.

* * *

Today also started with the routine of waking the captain.

When I went to wake up the captain on the second day, it went as I was told and he wouldn't rise no matter what, amazing me.

As I wondered why he rose on the first day, I tried reproducing my actions, whereupon he quickly woke up which startled me.

After that I tried several times, and finally understood the reason.

To wake up the captain, a certain keyword is required. Think carefully. The days that the captain wakes up easily is before battles or when he's to perform flying drills. And when I thought about what I did the first day, one common feature emerged.

That is the word "Dragon".

When I asked the lieutenant, it turned out that the captain was a giant dragon lover. Apparently that was the reason why he joined the knight corp. But because he also possessed the ability to back it up, he became the captain at the age of twenty two. Isn't that too fast!?

When I asked if the other captains were the same, it turned out to not be so. Captains are usually in their thirties or early forties. That's what I thought, but war is a trial by fire. The captains are also fighting in battles, of course. It seems that the fourth knight corps especially values personal ability above experience, since it fulfills a role close to that of a special attack unit. That's why this corp is filled with more young hot blooded men than the other corps.

In summary, that would make the captain the strongest person here, right?

...I can't see it. Rather, I'd say the lieutenant looks like the strongest and scariest.

As soon as I started using the keyword "Dragon", the captain started rising daily. Could this be instinctual?

And the braiding of his hair also turned into a daily occurrence. I bet the captain is making me do it simply because he's too lazy to do it himself, though.

I'm always, always looking at you with eyes filled with desire———cough.

Even though he's changing clothes behind me as I make the bed, I've become quite accustomed to it. When he's done he simply leaves the room, so the only thing I does is watch him leave quietly. After that I tidy up the room.

As I straighten out the sheets, I wonder what food mr Nasso will offer me today.

[Vito.]

My name suddenly called, the captain turned towards me even though he's in the middle of dressing. After all, it's the first time he's called my name.

Behind me is the captain who's trying to reach a button on his white jacket, making me sigh in relief. Oh, thank god he wasn't naked. But I feel that this is the first time our eyes have met since the first day. Although I can't see the eyes at all because of his bangs. I wonder what color his eyes are. I wonder if they are the same bright green like his hair?

His voice, which is neither high nor low, is pleasant. It's not gentle like Rance's voice, being slightly husky, but I like his voice. Even though he's always silent, never talking.

That's why it's rare that he calls out to me. It caused me to unintentionally put myself on guard. Could it be that my eyes have betrayed me and he caught on that I want to eat him?

[...Are you being made fun of by Stefano?]

It's about mr Stefano, huh. I'm glad I wasn't exposed.

[Oh, yes. But it's already fine... Errr, why did you ask?]

[I had a report, from Rance.]

So he even sent a report? Mr Rance is really a goodnatured young man. It makes me happy, but I wonder if he really had to go that far. Since then I've at times encountered mr Stefano, but seeing me work on unfazed seemed to surprise me, and he hasn't tried to mess with me since then. He told me [I lost my bet.] or something like that but when I asked him if most people bet that I'd immediately quit, he simply smiled bitterly.

[Thank you very much, for troubling yourself over me.]

It's true that the one assigned here has a different jurisdiction. The fact that he paid attention to me honestly made me happy.

[M-... It's part of a captain's, duties?]

It seems that the captain is thinking about various things. I'm sorry for believing you weren't thinking anything since you're always in a daze.

I mean, the captain keeps stumbling in places with nothing to stumble upon, standing for hours simply looking up at the skies. The ones who live here seems to treat that as the norm, not minding at all.

I truly wonder why this person became the captain. Could he be a wolf in sheep's clothing? Anyway, this person is almost like a cloud, simply floating along... Let me correct myself, since he looks delicious, he's like cotton candy.

[Vito, do you like, dragons?]

And then, a question came out of the blue. Just how did our conversation turn in this

direction?

I've got no idea what's going on in that head of his.

[Yes, I like dragons.]

After all, I'm one. Of course I love myself. Solid scales that turn away swords, when it's cold I can breathe fire creating a bonfire. And above all, I like that I can fly freely in the air. Although I haven't flown much lately.

Upon hearing my reply the captain smiled shyly. I couldn't see his eyes, but his mouth drew an arc so I guess he was happy.

[I will take you, to the house of the dragons.]

———Eh?

Dragon Life Chapter 11

The History Between Humans and Earth Dragons

Probably because dragons were considered dangerous, there were a lot of guards. The guards within the building held long sticks like police batons. Apparently they were items that allowed people who were not skilled in magic to create electric shocks, and were used to calm down the dragons when they rampaged. Caution is needed because if used on a human, it would burn them to a crisp.

Speaking of magic, this world's magic is much more underdeveloped than I thought it would be. Those who use magic are called 'Magicians' or 'Sorcerers' but they need to have a lot of magic and good control, therefore there are rare. However these magic users have developed magical tools, so items like those electric sticks exist.

When I entered the dragon stables, taken by the captain, I saw the dragons being individually kept in perfectly sized rooms. Its architecture is that of a cattle barn, but it is sturdily made with divisions made to prevent them from seeing each other.

From what I heard, apparently there are over 100 dragons, and some have been caught in the wild while others were bred and raised from babies.

These dragons are a species called 'Fire Drakes' and while they cannot breathe fire, they can fly. Since they have a lower intelligence than most dragons, as long as they are trained properly they will mostly listen to orders.

(TN: why are they called 'fire' drakes then??)

They are about the size of an elephant*, but they are skinnier and about half the size of me in dragon form. Their rock-like textured scales were the color of an overcast grey-blue sky. Their crimson eyes were narrowed and they had a very ferocious face. If I was going to create a parallel, I would say it looked like a crocodile's head. With rows of distorted jagged teeth, if one was bitten they would be inevitably rendered helpless. Their wings were similar to that of a bat, the wing's frames lined in a thin but sturdy looking membrane. Their face was anything but charming but it was deeply moved by meeting another species of dragon.

However it is really difficult to converse with them, probably because they are not very intelligent.

『Sleepy』『Tired』『Hungry』『Irritated』『satisfied』

That was all I could hear. It was all just words, no subject or anything. I tried talking to them when the captain wasn't looking, but they wouldn't even respond.

It's kind of disappointing, but I should probably give up.

The captain entered a certain stall, and patted the head of the fire drake that was lying

down.

The dragon also narrowed its narrow eyes. I thought it might be the captain's dragon and asked him, but apparently it was the vice-captain's dragon.

"I don't have a specific dragon."

He said in a slightly lonely tone of voice.

Aren't dragon riders supposed to have a dragon that they form a bond with?

When I asked later, it seems that the captain's dragon had died in a small war a year ago. After that he never got another specialized dragon, and instead just borrowed dragons from the other riders or used the extra dragons.

I used to wonder how bonds are born between humans and dragons. But when I came here, I understood. It is because the Dragon riders have come to accept their dragons, and their dragons in turn have grown to accept their riders as well. Humans and Dragons are beings that can co-exist.

———But that does not apply to me. Because I eat humans to live.

When I think about that, it makes me a little envious.

As I watch the fire drake the captain is petting, it begins to growl.

『ow ow、foot、hurts』

It spoke in a much weaker voice compared to the others. I involuntarily began to worry.

"Does it have an injury on its leg?"

When I asked that the captain turned to me with a surprised look.

"You can tell?"

Ah, dammit.

I said something like "Er, since it looks pretty weakened, uh, and it looks like its protecting its leg". I was just making up excuses, but the captain didn't doubt me at all and laughed lightly, saying "Vito is a good person"

Somehow I can't stop feeling guilty, like I'm deceiving him. Although I actually am deceiving him.

Apparently there are other species such as the Wurms and Basilisks as well. Since basilisks are about the size of dogs, apparently they are being kept as pets by nobles. I want to meet one once.

When the captain talks about dragons, he begins sparkling and he looks really delicious—Cough, he sparkled a lot more than I had ever seen before.

“There’s a lot of different types of dragons, aren’t there?”

“The ones that humans can actually tame are very limited though.”

That’s it. There was something that’s been bothering me for a while, so I could ask the captain. The dragon loving captain might know something. That’s what I’ll do.

“Captain, do you know about ‘earth dragons’?”

When I asked that, the Captain smiled the biggest smile by far.

“The legendary dragon. Can’t help but admire.”

...What’s with that sparkle. You’re like some maiden, Captain. Somehow, I feel embarrassed for him.

While I was watching the captain while noticing how much the Captain liked dragons, I saw the vice-captain on the other side of the captain. It seemed he had noticed us and was walking over.

The captain himself had started a conversation with the dragon’s caretakers, and so the Vice-captain came and spoke to me.

“Did the captain bring you here?”

As I nodded, I asked him something that had been bothering me.

“Um, did the previous serving girls get a tour of the Dragon house like this too?”

“..Nope. Wait, there were, but the girls would either turn pale and faint or run away. Actually I want to ask, Vito, aren’t you scared of the dragons?”

Eh, well they do look different from my expectations, but I feel no fear. Because we are both part of the same species. I was just deeply moved by my first meeting with my brethren.

But maybe I should take on the act of a maiden of age and act scared. “It was really scawwy kyaa—” ... Impossible. Such a maiden like scream is impossible for me. The least I could do would be “It was really scary Yo! Agh!”. How manly.

“I’m not scared. I heard that they are rather fierce, and is rather impressed that I got to meet them up close instead.”

“Hm, So there are people like you too. But for us that is very good. Just because the Fourth Knight Corps handles dragons, we have a hateful image. I’m glad there are people like you.”

“Even though it’s the holy beast of the country?”

“Right, you don’t know... our country’s holy beast is not the Fire Drake. Do you know that the legendary dragon is involved with our history?”

When I told him I’ve heard vague rumors, he explained it to me clearly.

But Vice-captain, didn’t you come here to take care of your dragon? It’s kind of like I got in the way, I feel bad now.

“It started about 1200 years ago, with King Darmon and the female dragon he followed. Her name was Tiamat, and apparently her scales were a brilliant scarlet, similar to that of the king’s hair. And with that king, the dragon led the country to victory many times. It is also said that when the king died, Tiamat had died at the same exact time like she was falling asleep. And that dragon is what we call an ‘Earth Dragon’.

I was honestly surprised by what Rau said, wondering if it is true.

“We still don’t know the ecology of Earth dragons, but apparently they have scales, can fly, and breathe fire unlike most dragons. And they are a pure and un-tainted white color. Apparently their body only changes color when they enter a contract with a human. It is said that they change colors to match the person they contracted. Since the last confirmed earth dragon existed 100 years ago, so I have never seen the actual thing but I have seen a painting of one. I have never seen a dragon so beautiful.”

The body color changes!? Then please, change to black! Its less flashy so the humans shouldn’t detect me so easily! ... But I need to be in a contract with a human. Eh, no need then.

“The next confirmed earth dragon was 900 years from now, named Yorumun-Garde and was contracted to an ordinary woman of the countryside. Apparently this dragon held the strongest title out of all the earth dragons. It is said that the woman had lived together with the dragon for a long time.

Was it interspecies dating? A human and a dragon? Is that possible? Umu... If they could take on a human form like me, does that mean they were Ariel? It’s a little interesting, but it has nothing to do with me.

“Perhaps because of the development in magic, 300 years ago a man from another world was contracted. Now summoning magic is obsolete, but back then it was frequently performed. The dragon had a rugged name of “Gorilla” but apparently it was a cute, peach colored earth dragon. “

What’s with that inappropriate name!!

“The last confirmed earth dragon, about 100 years ago, was Blue Ben Kiruvu who was contracted to the prince of the country at that time, and was the same blue color as the prince’s eyes. Back then the wars were more frequent and violent, and Kiruvu and the prince

won many wars, but during one of the battles Kiruvu obtained a deep wound and fell from the sky into a swamp where he sunk. The prince grieved and named the swamp Kiruvu and built a monument there. The swamp is currently placed between the country of Alvina and the city of Al-Vina. But right now, rather than a swamp a lake would be more accurate.”

The vice-captain’s story was very interesting. It seems that the rumor that country’s history has been intertwined with the Earth Dragons is true.

And since dragons always appear when they have a war, I feel that this country is really protected by the dragons.

But isn’t that war a little too long? How much does two countries have to hate each other for a war to go on for over 1000 years?

“The war with the neighboring country is prolonging, isn’t it...”

“Well we have been disputing from a very long time ago. We both carry heavy sacrifices and burdens. We can’t withdraw now.”

I hear that they have some skirmishes every few years. I wonder what happened to get the countries to hate each other so much. But there is no one alive that remembers, and it’s not in written history either.

“Actually, our relationship has gotten even worse recently. Soon, the war that has been continuing for so long will rekindle. If that happens we might lose, seeing how the other country has become larger... But for the country, we will give it out all.”

Vice-captain is planning putting his life on the line for the country. Even if they are defeated. Seeing his determined face, I finally gained an understanding of the concept of ‘war’. Since I have been living in peace, I never noticed. If this country loses, would it become dangerous for me who lives here as well?

——If that happens, I’ll escape and go to another place——...

“...But probably all of us holds the expectation that the Earth Dragon will come and save us again.”

That startled me.

The strong face of the vice captain is tinged with sorrow.

“That’s, that’s true”

My voice went weak and badly hoarse.

Hearing the Vice-captain’s story, I got mixed feelings.

———Truthfully, its heavy. The thoughts are heavy.**

I never really thought of my purpose being here in this world, and when I did I could never

find an answer so I had given up.

I thought that it does not matter to me.

Can a being who eats humans coexist with humans?

I wonder, how did the previous Earth Dragons live?

If that is my purpose for my existence, how am I supposed to go about this?

Look for a human to contract and go to war? Why? How does this benefit me? Why am I alive in the first place? Why am I here?

The more I think the more confused I get. It's as if there was a nest of insects in my head, moving about. My heartbeat is increasing beyond its normal limits, and my breathing echoes throughout my body.

.....Think carefully. Yeah. It hasn't been decided that I am that species called an Earth Dragon. I could just be a dragon similar to them.

Ignore the fact that you are strange. That's it. This has nothing to do with me.

It's supposed to have no connection with me. I mean, no one knows. No one knows that I'm a dragon.

I stopped thinking.

Thinking about this is just a waste of time.

A mission would only be a bother. I will live as I please. I have decided, even if it sacrifices someone else, or many people it has nothing to do with me.

Because that is the only thing my current self can do.

*TN: the kanji used there was像 which is pronounced 'zo' and means statue, but I think they meant 'zo' as in elephant

**TN: there's actually a pun here, saying that omoi(feelings/thoughts) are omoi(heavy)

Dragon Life Chapter 12

The Subjugation of the Man Eating Dragon = My Subjugation

“Lutoria! Its been a while. I heard you gained some more merit in the battle the other day! As expected of my childhood friend!*”

While I was thinking, a loud person came over.

He cut off my train of thought, and I was glad that he came over. But i was also disgruntled because he was also really loud. But, when I see the person’s clothes I bow my head in reflex.

———This person, he’s the prince.

I have passed by him sometimes in the castle, but this is my first time seeing him so clearly. Or with such a large smile.

His name is LeBlanche-something-Aruvina. In his full name, instead of ‘something’ he has dozens of names continuously strung together, there’s no way I’d remember. I think that people who can actually remember are amazing. Yup.

His eye-blinding bright blonde hair is tied in the back with a red sting, and his eyes are blue. He looks like some fairy tale prince on a white horse, straight out of a book. His clothes, while garnished with ornaments, was cut for easy movement like casual clothes. There was a dagger at his waist. I think if a commoner sold it, they could live off the money for a few years.

“LeBlance...”

“Ah, your highness.”

The captain only gives a little nod. The vice-captain bows like me but also includes the knight’s signature hand on the chest. It’s kind of cool. Maybe I could try imitating it the next time I’m alone. Aye-aye sir! Hahaha...

“So you were here too, Adolf! You also did well.”

“Thank you for your kind words.”

“Lutoria. I came here because there was something I wanted to consult you about. Since Adolf is conveniently here too, I saved some time.”

Ah, a really troublesome person came. I’m not really good with higher ups. I feel like I’ll get involved with some love crazy people because of them, so I don’t really have many good feelings to associate with them. Moreover, he’s a prince? If I go further, he’s the current heir to the throne. He’s the type of person I really do not want to get involved with. If I was seen together with the prince by one of the noble ladies, what kind of harassment would I

receive... Ah, its giving me a headache. Can I just leave because I don't have anything to do with the conversation now?

I quickly hid in the vice-captain's large shadow and came face to face with a fire drake. ...Its actually surprisingly cute. What does it eat? Probably meat from animals. Although if it was a vegetarian, it would be really funny.

"I want you to take on a mission."

"A mission... reconnaissance?"

"This time it's different. There's a bit of a situation...so I wanted to ask you to take it up."

Wait a moment, the prince called the captain Lutoria right? Since the Vice-captain always calls the captain "captain lu" does that mean captain's name is Lutoria? ...I don't know because he never introduced himself. I never heard his name from the Madam either. Somehow I suddenly feel bothered. Eh, 'captain' is fine. It's too much of a hassle.

"I want you to exterminate the 'man-eating dragon' that lives on Vizannu Mountain east of here"

Nn? Now that I think about it, he also said something about childhood friends. Maybe they're old friends, he didn't use honorifics after all. What is there relationship———

———huh?

"The rumors of a man-eating dragon has existed from a while back. Just in case I hired some mercenaries and sent them to subdue the dragon, but they haven't come back. The villagers in the vicinity have discovered traces of a battle and corpses. They were all probably killed and eaten."

———Eh?

"Since it was too difficult for the mercenaries, I sent out some soldiers from the first knight corps recently. But, as I thought, they did not all come back. Over half of them were killed... I understand the risks. You're the only one I can rely on. You're the Fourth Knight Corps Captain, you know what your dragon handling is compared to others, right? I can't just let it go free, leaving the villagers and general public to fear."

——w-wait, I just heard something I should not miss! What!? Extermination of the man-eating dragon!? That...could it be... me?

"'Man-eating dragon'... I've heard of it as well. It's rumored that it's incredibly violent and its body is as large as a third of the mountain, has pointed, bloodshot eyes that with one look can paralyze your body and all moving things are pierced by its sharp jagged fangs and are eaten."

I've heard Vice-captain's story from somewhere else before... but the story is seriously

dramatized. If there was such a monster, even I would abandon everything and run.

“I thought it might be ‘that’ dragon, but its actions show low intelligence. Villagers have seen it flying so a herd of Wurms must have moved in and are rampaging.”

Well sorry my intelligence is low. I was disgruntled but I kept calm.

“Rutoria, you can decide the subjugation troops. Actually I would like to go to see what kind of dragon it is but I’m currently being swarmed with work. Tell me about your trip later.”

“...roger.”

After saying a few words, the prince left like the storm.** However, he seemed to have noticed my presence and left with a wink in my direction. I’m getting goosebumps. This is my first time seeing a man wink. Even if he is a handsome prince, so I can barely comprehend this. I think I’ll have a heart attack if the Vice-captain did it. ...uhya, I imagined it.

“Adolf, rumor details.”

“I don’t know the specifics myself but apparently it resided on the largest mountain of the Vizannu Mountains, the one with Tienu village at the base. Apparently sometimes its cries can be heard, so it’s definitely there.”

“Tienu Village... Tienu”

The captain turned to me like he remembered something.

“Vito, from Tienu, correct?”

Ah, so he remembered that when I introduced myself I had Tienu as my last name. I’m surprised. The Vice-captain also looked surprised, and muttered ‘now that you mention it’ to himself.

“Do you know anything about this, Vito?”

I hesitated. I can’t slip up and say ‘it’s me’.

Comparing the two before me, I pondered what to do, and in the end decided to only tell things that would do no harm.

“Yes, even in my village there were some people who went into the mountains and never returned. After that everyone got scared and stopped going into the mountains.”

“Has anyone seen the dragon?”

“Not that I know of, sorry...”

It might have been a mistake to make Tienu Village my hometown. Apparently its become a little famous because of the man-eating dragon.

The two asked me a few questions but I never answered in detail. Maybe they believed me, but they didn't ask me any more questions after that.

I am very thankful.

* * *

The Captain and his comrades left early the next morning.

Apparently the members of the subjugation troops were the captain and vice-captain, Rance and Stefano and a few other knights. Since they're going there using the Fire-drakes, they're all Dragon Riders.

When they were leaving I saw them off, and the captain's braid then was really, really cute. Since long braids gets in the way of riding fire drakes, it was neatly put away. His hair is thin, so it must have been pretty easy to put together. Half of his hair is braided neatly like a farm*** and usually wild hair is tamed to a smooth wave. It kind of looks like the hairstyle of a noble's daughter. It really suited him. More like it looked really cute. Hey, can you please wear a dress? A wedding dress would really suit you!

Since I saw something nice from the morning, my will to do my work increased.

Besides, there is no dragon on that mountain so I don't need to worry. Because that very dragon is here, cleaning.

So I saw them off with confidence.

I saw them off but.

"Hm...?"

While I was wondering what Nasso would make for dinner today, I felt that something was off.

I wonder what it is. Something is making me anxious. I tried to think of various things, but I still couldn't figure out what it was.

———Speaking of which.

I suddenly remembered something the prince said yesterday.

"Since it was too difficult for the mercenaries, I sent out some soldiers from the first knight corps recently. But, as I thought, they did not all come back. Over half of them were killed."

Something is off? Since I was panicking then, I didn't notice anything weird. But now that I am calm and looking back, something is definitely weird.

Over half was killed? That mean about half of them returned alive.

When I fought against people, I didn't let even a single one escape.

I don't know what they mean by recently, but I've been here among people for several months now.

Since I was getting hungry, I was thinking of going to a faraway place and eating someone with magical powers.

Could the 'recently' the prince mentioned really be 'the other day'?****

But I am not at Vizannu Mountain.

...then the Man-eating dragon that mountain is?

Early release! I had some time on my hands, and this chapter wasn't so bad.

**TN: I'm not really sure what they meant, maybe something like 'he left as quickly as he came'?

***TN: I'm guessing something like French braids, or cornrows. He probably has something like an elaborate French braid.

****TN: The kanji used here was 先日 with means the other day, but it could also mean recently.

Dragon Life Chapter 13

There's no time to think. Go by instinct.

I took the next day off to fly to Vizannu Mountain.

Rather than a day off, it was more of a sick leave. If you get technical, however, its an unexcused absense because my boss, the Captain, is absent.

Either way, I was rushing to get to the mountain. I flew quickly and at a high altitude so I won't be spotted. I'm pretty sure that my white body served as camouflage with all the white clouds.

The captain had said that they would spend the night somewhere before going to subjugate the man-eating dragon, so I might be able to make it in time. What would happen if I met the subjugation group in my dragon form? Well, I would be exterminated, no doubt.

I don't care if you can call me an idiot, or a moth that is drawn to the flame! That' because I'm worried!! If the captain got eaten by another dragon, I wouldn't be able to stand it! ———I'm the one who will eat the captain!

Just for that reason, I escaped from work and took the risk of being seen in dragon form to go to the mountain. Even I wonder why I'm so obsessed with this idea. But do you really think that you would allow someone to steal the luxury food in front of you if you could help it? Yes? What a stupid question!

I have already sworn to eat the captain no matter what happens.

I have felt, somewhere deep inside of me, that a being like the captain is rare and that I wouldn't meet another like him in my whole life.

I, at that time, didn't even consider what this obsession might mean.

After flying for a few hours, Vizannu Mountain came up to view. To search for them I flew at a lower altitude and scoured the mountain. Empty.

In the end, I found them in an unlikely place.

———At Tienu village.

At the village at the foot of the mountain, several Firedrakes could be seen.

I was relieved to find that they haven't set off yet, but it seems like the situation is a bit different. The village is noisy, and there are villagers escaping from the village.

When I flew lower to see, I found that dragons I have never seen before were attacking the village.

Their wings were small and regressed, meaning they could not fly, and it had large round body with a tiny head that really didn't suit the rest of the body at all. It had tiny hands and feet, and crawled on the ground like a lizard. They were much smaller than the Firedrake, but were large in number.

The soldiers on Firedrakes were engaged in battle, fighting while protecting the villagers, but they seemed to be struggling with their enemy's overwhelming numbers. It seems that there were some victims as well as some injured, because I could spot a few people who had fallen down. It was just as I suspected, another dragon on the mountain. I don't know if they are a dragon or a snake, but it seems that they have taken over the mountain after I left.

I, very sincerely, feel that it was a really good idea to have South look after Lau and the group.

But I don't have the time to be thinking about that right now.

I wonder, should I help them?

Perhaps it's because they are used to war, but the Captain and his group had no wasted movements. But the battles they're used to are against humans, not a horde of dragons. It seems that since they are fighting against a new enemy, the Firedrakes cannot exert their full ability. While they were struggling, many little dragons took the opportunity to attack.

Wha, Stefano, stand firm! Rance is ... working with the Vice-captain to help get the villagers to safety. Aa—the rest of the dragons are attacking the Captain! Aagh, I can't take it anymore!

———I don't have time to think!

I quickly lowered my altitude while sucking in air. Crushing two dragons underfoot with vigor, I landed on the ground and let out a large fire-y breath. The fire, mercilessly killing many of the dragons on the field. Next, I blew fire at the other half of the herd in the opposite direction. The smell isn't that great, but it's more efficient than fighting them one by one.

While making sure I don't burn the Firedrakes by mistake, I breathed fire multiple times. I ended up setting fire to the roofs of several houses, whoops. I don't know how to hold back yet. My priority is to not burn the people and Firedrakes, and I don't have enough concentration to think about the houses too.

I continued to breathe out fire for as long as my lungs would let me. The area around me is an inferno, and the squad members who can use magic quickly get into action, making it rain to put the fires out. I'm thankful that the fire didn't spread. Also, sorry about the mess.

Finally there was only one enemy left. As I got off of the dragon I had been stepping on, it immediately leapt at me.

I quickly bit its neck before it could attack and killed it, before dropping it onto the ground.

———Ah, finally some peace of mind.

I turned my head to see what happened to the squad.

“Brad, be quiet!” “Calm down!” “Ow, stop being violent!”

It seems that my sudden arrival has startled the Firedrakes, and they had gone into a panicked rampage. The knights had been thrown off and were laying on the ground. Ouch, that looks like it hurt.

It seems I might need to intervene. Breathing in like I’m going to breathe fire, I squeeze out the air from the bottom of my throat, resulting in a roar. To humans it sounds like I just cried out, but if you translate it...

“Calm down! You’re actions are very disgraceful!”

What am I, a mother?

With that one roar, all of the Firedrake freeze and instead began quivering in fear. This time the knights had to comfort the Firedrakes that were backpedaling away.

I might have shouted a bit too tightly. Sorry.*

———Rather than that, the Captain’s well-being . . . !

It seems that the Vice-captain was tossed off further away and was not near me, but the captain was tossed off nearby and was sitting there staring at me dumbfoundedly. It’s not just the captain, the rest of the squad members were staring at me surprised too, as if they finally remembered my presence since the Firedrakes finally calmed down.

Could I have done something outrageous...?

Wait, I only did this because there was no other option! The thought of the Captain being eaten by another dragon just makes me really anxious.

I never imagined that I would move based on emotion! I don’t know what’s going on anymore!

I lower my long neck and look at the Captain a little closer.

———But he really does look delicious. When I’m in my dragon form, he looks even more appetizing. To a dangerous point. I can barely suppress my urge.

Its also my first time seeing the Captain from a dragon’s perspective. Its somewhat strange because I’m used to looking up at him, but now I’m looking down at him. His calm, bright green hair and his figure that is slender for a man, his supple hands and down to his toenails, the Captain that is seen through the pupil of a dragon is really irresistible. I felt as if I would never have an opportunity like this again.

———Aa, it's no use. I can't resist it.

And conveniently, I'm hungry right now.

Slowly I bring my face closer. As I get closer, my mouth gradually opens as well. That head, those arms, those legs, and that body, just thinking about it makes my mouth salivate.

The captain did not move. He didn't even try to escape. He looked like his usual self, whatever he did having come undone, and his usual three braids wavering in the wind.

"Captain!" The Vice-captain called out but I didn't hear him.

The captain still wasn't moving and was just looking up at me. I can't see his expression.

Hey, I've waited long enough, right?

You just look so delicious.

You will die, no, might die in the upcoming war, so rather than living on with that possibility wouldn't it be better to be eaten by me?

Loud heartbeat, an overwhelming sense of 'want'.

I, at this time, had fully and completely had become a simple 'beast'.

———Ah, just eat it.

I bit the Captain's arm with a large bite.

*TN: shouting 'tightly' is a reference to how she made such a loud 'shout', when she squeezed the air tightly to make her voice into a roar. No idea what the author is trying to say, but apparently in dragon anatomy, to shout you squeeze air. And perhaps it also signifies strength/anger? So she shouted a bit too fiercely (aka tightly) which terrified the Firedrakes.

Dragon Life Chapter 14

The Left Arm and the Color Black. Greed and Confusion.

※Grotesque scene warning※

While biting into the Captain's left arm, I flew to the cave that I used to call home.

I had originally bared my fangs with the plan to eat him whole. Thinking that I could easily eat the captain in two to three bites I opened my mouth wide, but he guarded himself at the last second and I only managed to bite his left arm.

Since I missed, I had planned on just eating him from the head first but the sweet blood seeping from the arm in my mouth stopped all thought process.

It was my first time tasting a human with such high quality magic. It wasn't blessed by the earth spirit nor wind or fire or water. I've never felt such a thing before. My chest throbbed and an overwhelming sense of elation.

When I realized how much of a waste it would be if I ate him whole, I flew away.

When I opened my mouth and pulling my fangs out of his arm and rolled the captain to the back of the cave, he slowly stood, covering his left arm. Before he could attack me, I pinned him down and held him there.

"Ngh..."

The captain let out a small pained noise because I was on his injured left arm.

Eh, it's fine. I'm going to eat him anyways.

Where should I eat him from, his arm? Leg? Or maybe from his head? Okay, since I already started eating his left arm, let's start from there. Oh no, the drool.

I suck on his left arm, which is currently trailing blood. Since I bit pretty deep earlier, I had cut the nerves and tendons. The arm can't be used now. An idea came to mind, so the arm from just above the elbow and downwards — was bitten off. Without any hesitation, the left arm is cut off.

Blood spilled into my mouth.

"——Ua, gh... ! ?"

He was holding back his cries to the point that his teeth had cut his lip, blood trailing from them. *

Due to the extreme pain of having his arm severed while alive, his body twitched and trembled and sweat ran down his skin, his face distorted in pain. His breathing is also rough.

While watching the captain hold his cut left arm to his chest with his shaking shoulders with large red eyes, I chewed on the left arm in my mouth. Savor it, stuff yourself on the taste of the blood and meat.

I swallow with a gulp and I can feel my heart and stomach being filled. Something is overflowing.

———I've never eaten magic so satisfying. Something strong yet gentle flows from deep within my body. With this elation, I am satisfied. I could eat any man in this world, but they could never beat this.

The idea that the right arm, both legs, the body and head still remains makes me excited. Even I think I'm being quite disgraceful. And cruel.

But to the me who was driven purely to fulfill this instinctual greed, human reasoning was just blown off. My desire to eat was just that strong.

Now where should I eat next? The right arm? Or the legs to prevent him from escaping? Or maybe the head from mercy? I jerked my face close to the captain, who was about to faint from pain, and licked the blood that was dripping from his lips, causing him to become stiff.

I'll eat the head next. Yeah, let's do that.

I open my mouth to a size that I can easily fit the captain's head into. I open and——— I froze, my mouth still open.

The long bangs had been brushed aside, and his previously hidden eyes were visible.

His eyes are narrowed in pain and filled with unshed tears, but the light deep within them are bright and clear.

Uwah, how long has it been?

———Black, the eyes are black.

I haven't seen a living being with black eyes in a long time. Since I haven't seen a single human with black eyes, I was overjoyed as well as hesitant. I was going to eat that. I want to eat, but then I would eat the eye too, · · · I was afraid I would never see a black eye again.

While I was hesitating with an open mouth, the captain weakly placed his right hand on my nose. He wasn't trying to push me back or to hit me, he just placed his on my nose.

What does this mean?

I was pretty certain that even the normally patient and calm captain would fight back at this point. Or maybe that he would surrender to his rising anger and bellow at me. Or that he would give me an expression of fear and cry out. But, on the contrary, he began to gently pet my nose with his right hand. Like he was soothing a child.

Even though he was trembling and his face was contorted in pain, his movements was awfully gentle.

Suddenly, he smiled gently. It was a joyful face.

———Whats making him so happy? How can he become that happy?

I mean, I'm trying to eat the captain you know? I even ate your left arm, and was about to eat your head.

Nevertheless.

How can you smile like that?

I've never seen anything like it. Even while his eyes are wet with painful tears, he can still smile like he's the happiest person in the world.

I've never seen an expression like this before.

With a more childlike expression, with a kinder expression than I thought possible, he smiled at me.

He had smiled faintly before, and he had also acted shy before but something like, like this———

"You, can eat me."

He looked up at me with obsidian, yearning, wistful eyes.

They were pretty eyes, with no hesitation.

———what, what did he say just now?

"But, in exchange,"

Something he wants to ask of me, even at the cost of his flesh and bones—— what is it?

I blinked, confused.

He softly reached out with his right hand, and brushed it against my cheek. I paused, confused of the comfortable warmth I felt in his touch.

He smiled.

He smiled in a way I have never seen before. This might have been the brightest smile he ever expressed in his entire life.

「"I want, you"」

This——

Thats unfair, Mr.Captain.

* * *

I won't be able to eat you if you make such a face. You're telling me to let the luxurious food item that's right in front of me go? But either way, my mood had changed and I had already let him go. But the urge to eat was still there. But for some reason the impulse to eat is refused.

I'm feeling more inclined to let him live, rather than to eat him. I wonder why. But the arm I had torn off and eaten won't return. Actually, it's quite likely for him to die from blood loss any moment now.

After considering for a bit, I broke off the smallest of my four horns and I pierced the exposed surface of the Captain's wound.

"Ah, ouch." Even though it should be pretty painful, the captain spoke in a carefree tone. After fixing it to the body by pressing on it, I put the remaining left arm into my mouth. I soak the stump in saliva, imaging the captain's arm.

———Since it's a part of me, it should be able to transform into what I ate. I don't know if it works on others though.

Pale and delicate, but has muscle definition because it's been trained.

Zuzu, a human arm was pulled out of my mouth, more specifically it was the captain's arm that I ate earlier. It seems that it went well.

The captain stared at his left arm that had suddenly returned to its original condition, and cautiously moved it.

He has an incredulous look on his face.

I can't believe it went well either.

I did it while thinking that it would be good if it worked. Since it went so well, I'm starting to think that I could even make a whole entire body. Since its moving properly, that must mean that there are nerves in it too. I guess a dragon's body can do anything. It's a tad late, but I think this body is amazing.

But it isn't an actual human arm but a dragon's replacement. As an experiment, when I tried to bite it scales appeared and deflected my teeth. The scales immediately disappeared, but the captain who saw the scales looked really surprised. I was also surprised.

"thi... this is"

One horn is cheap compared to his life.

Besides, if I can replace limbs like this, I could eat him little by little. But that also means that

the captain is being eaten alive, little by little. . . . my horn would also be sacrificed.

Meanwhile, my will to eat has been chipped away. So I'll leave the eating for another day. I convince myself that today is just not that kind of day. Until then— I bring my face next to the Captain's head and I grab one of his three braids by the base near his ear, and tear it off.

— — — Ah, just as I thought, the hair is overflowing with magic energy as well. Its kind of dry and hard to eat, but I put it in my mouth hairpiece and all, and slurp it up like noodles.

This is definitely going to become a habit.

I think I'll try eating people with long hair from now on. Its texture is like eating rope, but it'll definitely become a habit.**

After I finish eating, I head to the exit of the cave and open my wings.

If I don't go back now, I won't make in time for roll call. If that happens, I'll end up causing trouble chiffon who shares a room with me.

I flapped hard and lifted myself off the ground. From there, I flew directly way from Vizannu Mountain.

Even just eating the left arm was a big harvest. While thinking that in a good mood, I flew gracefully to a higher altitude.

. . . . Wait, what exactly did he 'want'?

Vito probably thought (at least in the beginning) that when the captain said 'I want you' he meant something of a 'I die you die' kind of thing? I'm not so sure, but at the very least she understood that she should keep him alive. Even if for a little bit,

This chapter was pretty confusing.

*TN: He was biting his lip to stop himself from crying out, but he ended up cutting/biting through his lip. Ouch.

**TN: she's using habit in not necessarily a bad connotation, but as something that she'll be doing often.

Dragon Life Chapter 15

One on One with the Captain. Talk of Rumors.

While I was relaxing in my room, a knock was heard. I called out with a 'sure' and answered the door revealing Ariade.

"Vito, may I speak with you for a moment?"

I step back into my room and invite her in. I was the only one occupying this room because Chiffon was away on break with her sister, shopping at the town around the castle. Since we don't have a table or chair, I had her sit on Chiffon's bed across from me. For some reason, Ariade's expression was dark.

"What's wrong? You have a really glum expression."

"Do you know the rumor that's been circulating the castle?"

The only rumors I've heard were the typical news of a love affair, adultery, or cheating that the nobles talk about. I can't recall any rumor that Ariade might be worried about.

"Right, you've been working outside of castle grounds so you haven't heard it yet..."

Aah, I see. Its true that ever since I was assigned to the Fourth Knight Corp's dormitory, I haven't really been able wandered castle grounds. That's probably why I've been falling behind with the rumors.

"An interesting story?"

"Rather than an interesting story...it's the rumor that the 'man-eating dragon' was actually an 'earth dragon'."

Is that so.

"When the subjugation corps went out to exterminate the man-eating dragon, apparently they got attacked by another dragon and ended up being saved by an earth dragon."

I see.

"Moreover, it took someone away but they returned, living and fine."

Interesting.

"And its rumored that the person who returned got contracted to the earth dragon."

What with that rumor, I've never heard of it before*—.Wa, wait seriously? What? WHAATT? When did the captain and I get into a contract?

There's no way! My body is still white, and I don't even know how to make a contract. How

can I make a contact if I don't know how?

"I, I see."

The captain's been acting normally since then. . . .wait, was he really? For some reason he doesn't seem to 'have his feet on the ground', well he's basically been acting normally.

"So my little sister, . . .I'm pretty sure she was attacked by the subjugation corps. They say that the earth dragon eats every single being it sees, and since my younger sister came back alive, that's the only possibility."

"But the subjugation corps members came back alive too, you know."

"If they managed to contract it, then they obviously would be able to come back. Besides, they say that all the people who went into the mountain before them didn't come back. . . . It must be, it must be so."

It seems that she had thought a lot to get to that answer. Ariade has a sad expression on her face, but her eyes spoke of determination.

Somehow I feel that I'm leading Ariade around in a wild goose chase and guilt wells up within me. I'm also pretty sure that if it wasn't for me, her little sister wouldn't be bedridden with her sickness.

I was filled with an overwhelming sense of guilt.

"Since I ended up grumbling to you about it, and I was worried that I ended up putting you in a bad mood. Sorry."

"No, it fine! I was glad that you came to consult with me."

We became pretty close after that, and I didn't exactly have any bad feelings after that anyways. More like I was glad that she consulted me. Even if I was the cause of her problems.

"So when you told me I can consult you whenever, it, well made me happy. I even caused you such a bother."

Blushing. Ariade definitely just blushed! With her cheeks tinted pink was quite different from her normal cool self, she looked more like a girl of age. If she was always like this, she would have tons of guys flirting with her. That in itself is pretty dangerous. Chiffon got called out to so many times as well. That girl could probably become the equivalent of a jewel-set palanquin. That's not what we're talking about though.

For some reason, I start smiling. Ariade's confession honestly made me happy. Ever since I came to live with humans, I seem to be living pretty calmly but I've more or less have been having my own inner conflicts as well. Even if I can't tell Ariade my worries, it's really reliable to have a friend who I know is willing to listen. It lets me see the illusion that I'm not alone.

“Thank you, Ariade.”

“No, thank you.”

Besides, when I talk to them everyday little things and create small talk, my worries seem to disappear.

“When you say that someone might have been contracted, do you mean...”

“The Fourth Knight corps captain... If I remember correctly”

Ugyah, just as I thought.

According to Ariade’s story, they’re certain it’s the captain because whomever came across the earth dragon, regardless of age or gender, got eaten but the captain came back alive even after being abducted.

———Eh, but I did eat him. The left arm.

So apparently this is the rumor that’s been circulating the castle by mouth. It’s apparently even spread to the town around the castle, and it’s seriously problem.

I knew I should’ve eaten all of him and not just the left arm!

I hope it won’t become anything too troublesome.

It did.

The captain began to wake up early without needing the key-word. Since I ate one of his braids, I ended up having to make two of them instead, like the ones that stereotypical long haired nerd girls have. It’s strange because this actually suits him as well. Hey, can you try putting on some glasses? And a sailor uniform too. It’ll definitely suit you.

Ahem, either way the captain’s been acting weird. He keeps on getting lost in thought and walking into walls, and he often ends up not listening when people talk to him. His mind is totally above the clouds.

While I was thinking about how this would really begin to affect his work, it happened.

“Excuse me Vito, but have you seen the captain?”

Rance suddenly called out to me while I was cleaning the common room. Right now everyone should be out there for training, I wonder what happened. When I told him that I haven’t he let out a dejected sigh with a mumbled ‘ah dammit’.

“Ever since then, the captain’s been acting weird. Do you know anything, Vito?”

Well if he’s been like that since ‘then’ then it’s probably ‘that’.

“I’m sorry but I’d like you to help me search from him. It’s bad if our work gets delayed any

longer.”

“Sure, I understand.”

“I’ll search the dragon pens. Vito, please look anywhere that comes to mind. If you find him, tell him that I was looking for him and bring him to the dorms please.”

“Okay.”

With a deep sigh and I ‘I’m counting on you’, Rance left the common room. With all of his struggles, I swear that he’s going to go bald in the future. Especially since there’s another problem child present here. A good example would be Stefano. It seems that he’s gotten better recently, but he still has a long ways to go. He recently got caught secretly meeting up with a noble woman from somewhere. Before that he was flirting with another woman in the courtyard. I’m afraid that one day it’s going to result in a bloodbath.

The day that happens and then he’d get caught and scolded by Rance doesn’t seem that far away. Rance is kind of like Stephano’s mom. Their names sound kind of similar too.

* * *

But really, I wonder where and what that person is doing.

Switching from cleaning the common room to searching for the captain, I looked in the dorms first but he was nowhere to be found. Since Rance said he’d be looking in the dragon pens, let’s go look on castle grounds.

“Ah, Vito~!”

It’s Chiffon. If I remember correctly, this is the time period where they clean the windows. I can see some familiar faces.

Even the fact that I used to work here a few weeks ago feels nostalgic.

“Good timing Chiffon, have you seen the captain?”

“The captain?”

When I hurriedly added on that he’s the captain of ‘the Fourth Knight Corps’, Chiffon told me that she saw him wander over to the garden through the courtyard.

I got some really good information. Well done Chiffon! **

“Hey hey, that captain is ‘that’ captain, right?”

Urg. As I thought, Chiffon has heard it too. Everywhere is abuzz with this rumor!

It seems her co-workers want to hear this story as well because they keep glancing in our direction.

“Ah, I’ll tell you later. Thanks!”

I hear an ‘Eeh— ! ’ of protest behind me but I ignore it and walk away. I refuse to partake in any complicated matters. I’m afraid that I would end up telling them some unnecessary things while talking.

Let’s hurry to the garden before the Captain changes locations.

I came to the colorfully blooming flower garden by walking through a neatly landscaped courtyard.

This place is usually used for date courses and tea parties and is not a place a normal servant like me can enter. But since there’s nobody here, if I keep quiet about it I think I won’t get found out.

I walked around quite a bit but I couldn’t find the captain. When I exited the garden thinking that he’s already left...

Ah, I found him.

Just as I was walking through the garden towards the exit, I saw the captain laying there hidden by the grass and bushes. It seems that I couldn’t see him while walking to the path to the middle garden because he was hidden in the shade. Also you can’t see him very well even if you look because he’s practically assimilated with the grass. You know, because his hair’s the same color.

“Captain, I was looking for you.”

It kind of startled me because his long bangs were divided straight down the center and I could see the area eyes clearly. And as always, he has his doll like face.

When I call out to him again, his eyes slowly open, revealing a pair of black eyes looking up at me.

Ahh, black is definitely the best. It makes me feel relieved.

“Vito?”

“Yes, it is. Who did you think I was?”

The captain sits up and cradles one knee, then reaches out with his left hand and touches my chestnut colored bangs.

“Who, I wonder... Its’ just, your presence was very alike.”

I don’t ask who. Somehow I have a very good idea who it is. I’m very troubled because the captain has sharp senses for the weirdest of things. I might get found out if I don’t get out of dorm duty soon. But even though the Madam said I could return at any time, the work here is challenging and leaving makes me feel a little lonely.

Lonely, huh. . . . I wonder, why I'm lonely? Because I won't go and wake up the Captain every morning? Because I won't be able to go to the dragon pens anymore? Because I won't be able to have long silly conversations with the Vice-captain anymore? Because I won't be able to hear stories of all the hard times Rance has had anymore? Because I won't be able to laugh with the other personnel about Stephano's relationships with women? The people in the dorm are all pretty good people. Even Nasso the chef, who waits for me with my meal. Its kind of like he's my grandpa.

. . . But the thing that bugs me the most is ———you, captain.

Really, you're so unfair captain. I wonder why I mind you so much. Because I want to eat you? There's that too. But there's also something else, rooted deep within my chest. Whether this comes from me as a human or me as a dragon, I do not know. It's frustrating because I don't know.

The person in question looks up at me with sleepy eyes. Just what are you thinking about.

"Rance has been looking for you. I even stopped my work to look for you, you know."

"I see, sorry."

"What were you doing?"

"hrn— . . . thinking?"

Please don't ask me. When I tell him that, he gives me a bitter smile and says 'you're right'. The captain slowly sits upright.

There's grass on his back. To return to the dorm like that is embarrassing, so I dusted the grass off of him and he finally stood up. When I stand up, I again notice how tall he is. He was so tiny before. Since humans can see things from so many different perspectives everything is always a new experience. Also even when I find someone tasty looking in a human form, I don't end up moving per instinct like in my dragon form.

. . . . I wonder what the captain thinks about that. I've actually been fidgeting, really wanting to ask.

Rather than Chiffon and the others, I think the one who wants to know the most is me.

Would it be okay if I just asked . . . ?

"Captain."

"Yes?"

"I have something I want to ask you."

It's just my curiosity acting up.

"I heard that you met with the Earth-dragon in the rumors, but is it true that you contracted it?"

The captain had a blank look on his face, but suddenly began laughing and giggling. I wonder what's so funny.

"What do you think, Vito?"

"Wh, What I think . . ."

I didn't think I would get a question in reply. It's actually my first time having a question answered with another question.

I wonder how I should reply.

"Hrm. . . . No, maybe?"

"Yup, I haven't."

He said it so frankly.***

"But, you're the first one to say that, Vito. Everyone only either says 'I don't know' or 'you did'."

Dammit, did I just dig my own grave? I kind of panicked but the captain doesn't seem to mind at all. He just looks up at the sky and stretches. Since there was grass in his hair as well, I reach out and take them out. The soft feeling of his hair was transmitted from my finger. This hair, this hair has definitely become a habit. Ah, oh no, I'm not drooling am I!? Ah, good I wasn't.

"Shall we go back?"

Since he stood up, I can't see his black eyes anymore. While thinking that its regrettable, I answered with a 'yes, lets' and followed the captain back to the dorms.

While we were walking we ended up meeting with Rance, and the captain got thoroughly scolded. Although the captain was pretty dazed, and it looked like he didn't hear any of Rance's words at all, head floating above the clouds again.

Rance, realizing that the captain wasn't listening stopped scolding him and let out a large sigh instead. With a 'now, lets go back' he slapped the captain across the back.

Since I still had work to do, I returned to the dorms from there.

On my hand lingered the sensation of the captain's hair.

My heart is warm, just a little bit.

I wonder what this is.

Thank you for reading! There's probably a need for some editing, but this is the best you're gonna get for now. I might get pissed off and come back here to edit sometime, but I really don't feel like it right now, Sorry.

Also, the romance plot bits are finally beginning to move! Its SO SLOW though hahaha. I guess I can't expect much from the dragon and her food captain.

*TN: Vito's being really flaky, just kind of imagine her words in a fake innocent tone. Yeah.

**TN: There was another sentence here, but I really couldn't put it into English.

***TN: Vito actually speaks with some distaste here, but I couldn't bring the tone into English very well.

Dragon Life Chapter 15.5

Extra Chapter: POV Lutoria

“There’s No Time to Think. Go By Instinct” Captain’s POV.

I have never see a living being with such sublime beauty before.

From just one glance my heart was beating violently, large quantities of blood racing throughout my body. From my head to toe I was overwhelmed with a feeling of warmth, gradually filling my body.

I was completely captivated by its appearance.

Folding its wings about three times its size, it bends its neck back in a leisurely manner.

Each scale has a bright white sheen, and when it moves the scales overlap, glittering brightly in the sunlight. Its neck has a smooth curve, but its body limbs were toned and its frame strong. Sharp long nails adorn its hands that are somewhat smaller than its feet. Its four horns that from its feet and head had a purity reminiscent of a unicorn. I wonder if it tears people apart with those sharp teeth I can see in its peach colored mouth, and when I imagine its mouth stained in blood, fear ran through my body and spine.

Red borders its eyes, and is surrounded by white eye-lash like things. Its eyes themselves were like jewels made of blood, its color a bright and vivid scarlet.

———A creature of legend. “Earth dragon”.

Even among the multitude of dragon species, there is one species that is exceedingly rare.

That is the “Earth dragon”.

It lives deep in the mountains and it is rarely seen near human habits, with a particularly violent temper is also known to eat people who see it.

But Earth Dragons have also been known to save the kingdom generation by generation, and is also revered as legend.

And when this legendary being, no, when this mysterious creature appeared before me, I couldn’t suppress my curiosity.

Its ecosystem——what’s its body structure like——how does it breathe fire——question after question pops up and the creature’s presence itself overwhelms me, leaving me unable to think properly.

It’s not just me, either.

It’s happening to everyone who came with me as well.

It lowers its head towards us. As it slowly moved towards us I was completely captured by its red eyes, unable to move.

Someone who noticed what was going on and called out my name, but by then it was a tad too late.

———A widely opened mouth reveals four sharp fangs. And that mouth, moving towards me, moves swiftly and bites

「——!」

Finally realizing the dragon's intent, I lifted my left arm to guard my head, and a sharp pain ran through my arm. I tried to pull my arm out of its mouth but one of its fangs had pierced my hand, and another two had completely crushed my arm below the elbow, making it impossible to pull out.

“Captain!!”

Ah, so it was Adolf who cried out. I can hear the screams of his men from behind him.

I had forgotten about them.

Since the opponent is an Earth Dragon, we probably can't defeat it by normal methods. And I can't exactly move because of my left arm is completely stuck.

——— —What's going to happen. I'm probably going to be eaten. . . . That, might be okay. I've managed to meet a being that is beautiful and deeply resonates with my being*. Even though it was only for a moment, it had enough impact to last me a lifetime. Ah, but if it is possible...

While I was dazedly thinking, my arm is sharply pulled and I am simultaneously lifted into the air.

“...Huh?”

“Ca,Captain!!”

“Captain Lu!?”

With a loud woosh and strong winds, my feet were instantly off of the ground.

Honestly, I don't remember much after that.

———Ah,

———but,

———If its possible,

“I want you.”

*TN: He said that her presence 'deeply disturbs his heart' but it's generally meant in a good way?? And I have no idea how to make that positive, or to fit that into that sentence.

Dragon Life Chapter 16

Serious Stories and Outrageous people. The name is...

Since I was kind of worried, I visited the dragon stables during my break. Since I've been visiting here often, the guards now remember my face. Now I can enter the stables without having to explain myself every single time.

There already was someone in the pen I was looking for, and they noticed me and turned around.

Yup, he still has his usual scary face.

"How's it's injury?"

"It's not that great. Did you come here just for that?"

"Yes."

"...You really are a strange person, Vito."

Just like the vice-captain said, there probably aren't many people who come to see the terrifying dragons because they like them. And these dragons, I can tell it's formed a bond with humans unlike those other dragons. So they don't rampage often, and I can tell they really like their human partners. Especially the vice-captain's dragon, it seems to be used to humans in general rather than just its partner and is mostly pretty docile. But when its next to the vice-captain, their intensity doubles.*

"She's called Reina"

Oh, so it's female. It's really hard to differentiate between the genders of dragons, or just animals in general. I don't know whether it's because I'm ignorant, or if my memories as a human is getting in the way of my perception. If that's true then I shouldn't be able to differentiate between humans either. Confusing.

"Since I've been taking care of her from an early age, she's basically a part of me now. But since she got injured in the previous battle she can't fight, but that makes no difference to the fact that she is my partner."

The vice-captain's gaze when looking at Reina was that of a parent watching over their child, and was very pleasing to watch. Speaking of which, is the vice-captain married? He's about that age. If I remember correctly, he's 38 years old. The vice-captain's wife and children... I can't imagine it.

The vice-captain has light navy colored hair cut in a crew cut and his eyes are light brown. His skin color is healthier than mine, and his muscles! Well... his structure was just as I said, really. His scary face is there, as always. If the vice-captain has kids, I wonder if they're like him. I'm kind of curious.

"Ah right, Vito. I've been picked to meet the messenger from Tiruzoto but I ended up being chosen to accompany him as well. So I won't be here for a while."

"Does that mean...war?"

I recall the time he told me that a big war might be approaching. The vice-captain seemed to have difficulty replying, but answered anyway.

"The prince really wants peace, but the other country's replies have been really vague and no one really knows what's going to happen next."

I don't know much about the country Tiruzoto, but all the rumors I've heard are not very good. I've also heard that even though there is a large-scale war looming in the horizon, they frequently have skirmishes with us. Even though it's so peaceful now, I wonder if a lot of people are going to die in the war. Will this peace disappear?

"Uh, don't you have any preparations or something?"

"The people who know of this are few. To prevent panic and confusion, everyone else was just told that were going to welcome the messenger."

"Is it okay for you to be telling me such a secret?"

The vice-captain just smiled in reply. W-was it really okay that I heard this? I'm kind of nervous.

"Tiruzoto has been using cowardly tactics for a very long time now. We don't exactly trust them, but we can't ignore such a large country either. They've always wanted to assimilate our country with theirs from the very beginning. Especially since our dragons are a formidable force, they probably want them pretty badly."

"I wonder...what are they trying to do with all of this power?"

"They're probably trying to take over the continent. In fact, they've gone and created a few skirmishes with Waruteru up north."

"Taking over the continent, huh."

I wonder what they want to do after conquering the continent. If a large-scale war is caused, dragging in all people and living beings, what would remain? Glory? Wealth? Honor? ...I really can't understand those people who try to cause war. Perhaps its because I have memories of living in a peaceful Japan, but my thoughts are biased against war.

I don't understand.

I also don't want to understand.

"Urm,... will the captain be going too?"

"Yeah, captain Lu and I are most definitely going. We've been singled out, even in their country. After that there'll be some soldiers going with us, as well as our country's representative."

Is it just me or does the fact that they're singling out some well-known soldiers seem suspicious. You know, since there's the whole rumor about one of them being contracted. I'm not though. Kind of like 'crush 'em now while we can—', or something. ...maybe I'm thinking into it too much? And I really doubt that rumors could spread to a neighboring country in that short of a time. Wait, haven't I been causing trouble in the most ridiculous of timings? There's that matter with Ariade too. Somehow it makes me a bit depressed.

"That means you're taking the dragons with you, right."

"No, actually. We won't be taking the dragons with us. If we take them with us, it might be taken as a declaration of war. It seems at the very least, we'll have a sword with us."

"Will you really be alright? What is the other side—"

"We have no choice but to pray it doesn't happen."

The vice-captain replies while interrupting my words.

They would have to go, even if it's probably a trap, if it has the possibility of forming the peace the prince seeks. The vice-captain tightly gripped the handle of his sword, eyes lowered.

* * *

After seeing off the vice-captain who apparently still had work to do, I look up at Reina.

Red eyes looked towards me.

『Sad? 』

"Yeah, ...a little."

Somehow, I don't really understand. While I was living in the mountains, I couldn't care less about the warring countries, and I felt it had nothing to do with me. But having it placed right before my eyes, as something basically unavoidable causes complex emotions to rise. I wonder when a war really does start, would I really be able to throw everything aside and run away. There was the whole thing with the captain and I might have been a tad too excited. Although I'm obsessed with not letting anyone else eat the captain, he's actually an irreplaceable being to this country. I've started to think that maybe making the country lose such an important person due to personal greed is not good. Even more so since I'm actually living in this country. Even though I could eat other humans so easily, I'm contradicting myself. Lol.**

I was hesitant. Humans and dragons. The instincts and wants of both sides are so strong

that I don't know which one to prioritize. I found out last time that when I am in my Dragon form, I tend to rampage based on instinct. Maybe if I'm going to live as a human, maybe it's better if I refrain from turning into a dragon as much as possible.

Reina leaned forwards and rubbed her cheek against mine. I can feel the cool uneven surface of her scales on my skin.

It seems that since she was raised in captivity, not only is she calmer than the originally wild dragons but she seems to be quite smart as well. I noticed after coming to see her several times.

It's not just her, all Fire-drakes raised in captivity seem to be quite different from the wild ones.

『Me, fight. You, free. 』

If the vice-captain could hear Reina's words, he probably would have been so happy he cried. Reina wants to be with the vice-captain till the very end. I can feel their bond.

But I wonder what she meant by me being free.

『Earth dragon. 』

Surprised, I raised my head. I find a pair of calm of red eyes looking down at me.

“How did you—”

Reina turns her head towards the pen next to hers. Is she telling me to go there? If I remember correctly, that pen held Stefano's Fire-Drake.

I felt extreme reluctance after hearing what Reina said, but I did as she motioned and entered the stall next to hers. In there a Fire-drake with scales a darker red than Reina's greeted me as if it was waiting.

『Village.』

That one word was enough to explain everything. I've met this Fire-drake in my dragon form before. I also remember yelling at them in rage. In a sense, it was a pretty good memory.

『Surprise, presence, same』

I don't know if it has to do with animal instinct, but it seems that they knew I was a dragon from back then. They even understand my words.

Reina probably heard about me through this Fire-drake. I see. I saw them as vicious beings but they're all actually good children. Uu, I'm tearing up.

“I'm sorry I shouted at you back then.”

I reached out and touched its rough, scaly cheek and in return I was licked, as if to say that it doesn't mind. Ahg, my hand is sticky. But somehow, I'm glad. I've always thought that I couldn't communicate with them. Even though my hand is sticky my chest grows warm and I start smiling.

"Vito?"

I hear Stephano's voice from behind me. He stares between the Fire-drake and I, looking as surprised as he did back then, when I was in my dragon form.

"Hello. Sorry for intruding on your dragon." ***

"No that's fine but,...aren't cha scared?"

"Erm, I'm very scawwed—.....uwah, wha—"

The Fire-drake licks my neck from behind. This bastard, not just his partner like this but his dragon too! I hit its cheek gently in a reprimanding manner and it lets out a gurgle of discontent. But instead of trying to retaliate, it instead bites my hair and covers it in saliva. No, actually this is painful. My hair that already has a horrible habit of going everywhere is going to become even stiffer!

"Hey Brad!" ****

Unable to just watch Stefano scolded his Firedrake, Brad. Brad visibly wilted after being scolded, and it was kind of cute.

"What are you doing, playing with him? Wouldn't you normally go 'kyaa Stefano please save me—'?"

"...why do I have to do that."

"Most women would react that way."

Ah, I see. Well I'm not most women.

"More like, I wasn't playing with him."

"But it looked like Brad was having fun?"

"You say that even after seeing what he did to my hair..."

Brad's saliva is really sticky. I want to go back and wash it already. Stephano just laughed saying sorry as if he was mocking me. This person isn't sorry at all. Brad however made little noises with his throat as if to say sorry.

『Apologize.』

"Ah, its fine."

“What are you talking about?”

Ugya. See this is what happens when I let down my guard so I’ve been trying to stop, but what is with this lack of attention!

“...Ah, well it seemed like he was apologizing so.”

“Well, eh, ok.”

Ah, good. I’m really glad it was Stephano. If something doesn’t strike his interest he really doesn’t care. He really only pays attention to things about women, young women, and girls.

Brad begins to try to gain Stephano’s attention. Acting as if there was some sort of procedure, Brad carefully licks Stephano’s neck and forehead so it won’t get sticky (that last part’s important). While Fire-drake scales are bumpy, they’re nice to the touch. ...Stefano, somehow become sticky, dammit!!

“It seems like the rumors about you coming to the dragon stables often is true.”

He tells me he heard it from the captain. Captain please stop spreading it around! Especially to Stephano.

“You must have a thick liver, you’re the second woman I’ve seen that didn’t freak out after seeing a dragon.”

When I asked who the first person was he replied that it was his ‘sister’. Apparently she’s a dragon rider as well, and is traveling across the continents with her partner. Apparently she left a few years ago screaming ‘the world is waiting for me!’ and still hasn’t returned. I admire her. I was actually quite surprised that women could become dragon riders. When I mentioned that I was told that there were a few women in the first knight corps as well. Their vice-captain is a woman too. I’m surprised.

Apparently as long as you have the ability, even women are accepted into the knight corps. This place might be less conscious of gender than I thought. I wonder if this is because the difference in history, here there’s even the legend of a woman contracting an earth dragon. I think that had an impact on society.

“Weren’t ya going to wash your hair?”

Ah, right. I had completely forgotten, let’s go wash this sticky hair.

It seems Stephano is going to stay there for a bit, and as I left the stables he called out to me again.

“Ah, right, Vito.”

“Yes?”

He has this really unsettling smile of satisfaction. I have a bad feeling about this.

“Next time can you introduce me to that co-workers of yours? You know, the one with the big boobs.”

“No.”

Who would hand over their friend to a playboy? I gave him a sharp reply and left.

I heard laughter behind me but I ignored it.

How disgraceful! Stephano is really outrageous!

FINALLY FINISHED!!! That took much longer than I would have liked it to.

*TN: She’s talking about how they have similar faces, and so when they’re lined up next to each other its double the intensity.

**TN: She said ‘Laughing’ here and that just sounded weird, so I went with the closest alternative.

***TN: Basically sorry for bothering your dragon.

****TN: He’s saying it into a scolding manner.

Dragon Life Chapter 17

The employee's four daughters. It also includes marshmallows.

After eating Nassau's dinner and returning to my room, Madam called for me.

It seems that you only get called for by Madam if you've made a terrible mistake. Chiffon put a lot of emphasis on it while telling me. Now that I think about it, isn't Chiffon pretty clumsy? ^[1]

Anyways, Nassau's food is as delicious as always. It's a bit heavy though, probably because it's made for solders. We have soup every day but today's was something similar to pumpkin soup, made of mashed yellow vegetables and milk. By the way, the names I gave the vegetables are purely based on their appearance. When I got to see a carrot it was redder than what I was used to but it looked like a carrot and tasted like a carrot. It's convenient that I don't need to learn new names for them. Mental translation, thank you.

The main dish is always meat but I enjoy it because the flavoring is different. Although today's dish was ginger flavored, sometimes it would be dice steak, seasoned with vegetables, soup with meatballs, or a boiled and marinated dish. There's a lot of variations. But I was told that there are more kinds of side dishes than main dishes. Nasso declared that dishes are made solely by the number of ingredients, combinations and seasonings with much fervor. I gave him a very big applause. Amazing! There is definitely nothing better than eating! Food, banzai!! And if possible, I want him to make Japanese food. I want to eat sushi and Isobe-age. ^[2] No, wait, if it's Isobe-age I could probably make it if I got some seaweed...? But I'm an eating specialist. This is non-negotiable, whether I be in human or dragon form. ...I can cook, at an average level, maybe,probably.

You might be wondering why I don't try to cook people. That's because people are meant to be eaten whole! Eat wildly!^[3] This is Dragon•Life! ...My brain really has become dragon oriented.

I walked to Madam's place while thinking such things. I look calm and collected on the outside, but my brain is filled with thoughts of food. Is that bad?

Anyway, what exactly did I do? I've been just cleaning normally, ah, maybe its about my unexcused absence? This is bad.

With a nervous sigh, I knocked on Madam's door. Receiving permission, I entered the room.

"Sorry for calling you over while you were resting."

"No no, its fine."

There's no problem. I was just talking to Chiffon about sweets.

"Actually we found a suitable servant for the Fourth Knight Corps."

...How sudden. Was this why I was called out?

“We had someone prepared just in case you came back, but you stayed for a long time. We thank you for that. But the other day, a perfect candidate for the job came in. If you wish to continue work at the dorms that is fine, but it would help us greatly if you came back.”

Oh.

“What do you mean by the ‘perfect candidate’?”

“She is Mr. Defoe’s daughter. Its not a job very well suited for her, but she insisted that she wanted to work in the same workplace as her father. It’ll probably put the father to ease to have her nearby, and it’ll help her as well. She said she was okay, even if it was difficult work. What an ambitious child.”

Madam is smiling. I guess she’s a considerably good child. ...—Huh? The Vice-captains D A U G H T E R?

So he did have a child! A daughter, even!!

“Is something the matter?”

If someone more suited than me has arrived, then I should withdraw gracefully. Madam did tell me in the beginning that it’s only until they find another person. Especially since it’s the Vice-captain’s daughter. There is no reason for me not to withdraw.

I’m a bit sad though. But timing wise, this is a pretty good opportunity.

I gave a small nod.

“Yes please.”

Ah, wait I can’t eat Nassau’s food anymore. Dammit... ! !

* * *

In the end I couldn’t even properly give my regards. Madam told me that since it’s a sudden thing she would be the one to tell them about the change. Since she told me that I can already get back to work, it should be fine. I wanted to part ways properly though. But I don’t have a reason to go there anymore.

I regret not being able to eat Nassau’s food anymore, but it can’t be helped. But maybe I can sneak over there and get some food. There’s a lot of food made daily, and there’s bound to be some extra. Oh, maybe I can use food as a reason? Properly give them my regards, as well as get some of Nassau’s food.

I really am food oriented.

“Vito you’re going to come back? Really? Uwah, I’m glad! We can work together again!”

When I told Chiffon that my assignment is returning to normal, she was very excited as if it was about her. It made me kind of happy.

"I wonder, did if they find a replacement?"

Ariade was also here. Since the beds take up the majority of the room, so the only seat we have are the beds. By the way, Ariade is seated next to me.

"Yeah, apparently its the vice-captain's daughter."

"Vice-captain... ah, that girl."

"You know her?"

Ariade frowns a bit, but shakes her head and tells me it's nothing. Does she know something? I'm curious, but I don't want to force her to tell me. While I was trying to withhold my curiosity, there's a knock at the door. Maybe its one of the co-workers? They sometimes come around and pass out candy or snacks, so I'm kind of looking forward to it. However, that doesn't seem to be the case.

When Chiffon calls out with a 'its open-' Chiffon walks in. ...Wait, Chiffon?

"Chiffon?"

"Eh?"

Chiffon is seated on the bed right across from me. But Chiffon has also entered the room from the door. Wha, wait. Two Chiffons?

"Ah, Sis! ^[4]"

Sister!?

She has the same honey-colored hair, but it goes down to her waist. Their eyes are also the same color. Not to mention how there's another pair of marshmallows ! ...really,why do I keep seeing things from a perverted old man's perspective? Maybe when I was human, I was an old man? If I was, I want to be a dandy old man, and not a pervert.

But I really was surprised. They're...

"You had a twin?"

"Yup! Did I not tell you?"

She never mentioned it before. Since she called her 'older sister' I thought she was much older, but they look exactly the same. They're definitely identical twins, no matter how I look at it. But she has a tastier aura to her. Does that mean she has more magic power? But that was a surprise. Really, a surprise. Ariade looks between the two of them with an open-mouthed expression, probably also surprised. If their hair lengths were the same, I would

definitely mistake the two.

Seeing our surprised expressions, Chiffon's sister laughs with a 'fufufu'.

"Even our parents used to mistake us for each other. We even switched our names as a prank. Even now I still respond to the name Chiffon."

"I was often mistaken for you in the castle as well. It was really troublesome to explain!"

"Really? Sorry, although I did tell them that my sister is working here now as well."

If they mistake you two even after being told, that just means that you two look that much alike.

Chiffon mumbled about cutting her hair even more. It seems she doesn't like being mistaken for her sister.

"So you two Vito and Ariade. Feel free to just call me Madeline! Our ages aren't that different, so let's get along."

Their parents must really like sweets. I later found out that they also have a younger sister and brother, whose names are Millefeuille and Chocolate. I'll call them the (western) sweets family from now on. Yeah, let's do that.

"Ah, you were talking about something, right? Sorry for interrupting your conversation, but what were you talking about?"

Madeline sits next to Chiffon. Now that I see them side by side, they really are identical. Even their way of talking is also identical. But if I pay really close attention, Madeline speaks more crisply compared to Chiffon.

"We're talking about the girl who's going to take over Vito's job! Apparently it's the Vice-captain's daughter!"

I add that it's the Fourth Knight corps's vice-captain. When I say that, Madeline's eyes widen.

"So you were the person who got assigned to that job that everyone quits?"

"Ah, yeah."

"Since there was no change in such a long time, we thought that finally the right person appeared... but I guess it changed again."

"Madam said they found a better suited person than me."

"And that person is the Vice-captain's daughter?"

When I nodded Madeline made the same face as Ariade did and paused, thinking.

"If I remember correctly Mister Defoe's daughter... she's the spoiled one, right."

Hmmm. Is the vice-captain's child a person to be so bothered about? I'm kind of curious. I want to ask but Madeline said it was nothing, and changed the conversation. I'm really want to know. ...a lot.

There was also another thing I wanted to know.

"Since when have you been working here, Madeline?"

If she's the same age as Chiffon, she's supposed to be 17, and from what I've heard of the first knight corps, they've all worked there for more than 1-2 years.

"Since I was 12. I started working ever since I was adopted."

"Adopted?"

"My name is Madeline Morante. The Morante family is technically nobility, but they're a bit unusual. They have children but don't have a successor, so when my family and I came to visit the castle-town I was invited in.

"Isn't the Morante family the family that's been serving as court magicians for generations?"

Ariade becomes even more surprised. Are magicians that rare? I heard that there aren't that many of them, but I've never actually met one so I wouldn't know.

Apparently there were a lot more magicians 300 years ago, when inter-dimensional summoning was popular.

"Does that mean you have a lot of magical power?"

"Hrm... I can't really tell myself, but apparently I do."

When I observed her closely, it seems she is liked by my favorite food, the spirit of earth. Recently, I've gained the ability to see what spirit people are blessed by if I concentrate. By the way, Ariade is blessed by the spirit of water.

"I didn't want to just rely on the Morante family, and so when I said I wanted to work they got me a job in the first knight corps that my brother-in-law, Oyoshi, works at."

Although Oyoshi is a biological child of the Morante family, apparently he doesn't have much magic power.

Hmmm. But twins are so mysterious. I know a pair of human twins from my human memories, but they were fraternal twins so they had different appearances and different personalities, so meeting people like Chiffon and Madeline is a new experience for me. THIS is what twins are! Probably.

“Since we’re twins, perhaps Chiffon has magic power as well?”

“We had it looked into, but apparently I don’t have any magic power, unlike my sister.”

Maybe Madeline ended up taking all of Chiffon’s magical power in the womb. She does seem tastier than the nobles around here.

Detecting how much amount of magic power someone has by how delicious they seem is pretty weird too but.... If I had a sister like Madeline, I think would really look up to her. I really want an older sister. That means I had an older brother, I’m kind of disappointed.

“There’s a way to detect someone’s magical power?”

“Oh, you don’t know? It’s an glass ball small enough so you can hold it in one hand. If you’re curious I can bring it in next time.”

No, I’m good. I’m curious but I have a feeling that the results are going to be really troublesome. Because I’m a dragon.

When I decline, Madeline mutters an ‘is that so’ and looks disappointed.

More like are you even allowed to bring the measurement tool here?

“I was requested by my father-in-law. There might be more people like me who are magically powerful that is a commoner, so if anyone’s curious have them take the test. And if they are, to encourage them to join us.”

Aah, that was dangerous.

“My intuition is pretty good, and so I wanted you to try the test Vito... but I won’t force you to. If you ever change your mind, tell me! Ah, right, how about you Ariade?”

“I’m fine.”

Cool as always, Ariade. But I like the gap that shows up on occasion. ^[5]

“U-n, you guys are difficult to persuade. Well, that’s fine. Anyways, we should all get a break together and go to the castle town! I know a store with cute clothes and accessories! It’s a pretty good idea, right?”

Now that I think about it, I don’t have any normal clothes other than my uniform. I was dressed like this for my entire break, and I hadn’t even thought about changing. I saved up quite a bit of money, and it might be a more convenient to get one or more sets of clothes. It’s also been a while since I’ve last planned an outing with fellow girls. I wasn’t that good at choosing out clothes, but I had a friend who kept track of trends and helped me buy stuff.

There is a nostalgic and happy feeling.

Somehow I can recall a lot of human memories today. Strange. It seems that if I’m living as

a human, human memories are easier to recall.

The next day, I found out why Ariade and Madeline wanted to go shopping so much.

* * *

Since I was in charge of role-call today, I gave the list to Milena after we came back.

“You’re Vito • Tieniu, correct?”

“Eh? Ah, yes.”

A cute girl suddenly popped up in front of me. She’s about 15cm shorter than me and wearing the same clothes. Even though it’s the same clothes, she seems to have worn it better. I wonder why. Even though it’s a normal servant uniform, when she wears it, it looks like some normal cute everyday clothes. She has familiar navy eyes and silky peach-colored hair that is tied in two by lacey ribbons right above her ears. Maybe she’s using some make up, not as heavily as the noble women we see around here, but her large eyes really caught my attention. Her lips also seemed have something like gloss on them. It kind of makes you want to involuntarily kiss them. Oh, no not me. I was speaking for the general male public.

Anyway, she was really different from those dressed up noble ladies we see often.

“Fuunn. So its you, huh.”

She inspects me from head to toe and wrinkles her forehead in displeasure.

“Hair that’s not even tamed properly and tanned skin, not to mention the lack of makeup. Haa, you’re a failure as a woman. Not good at all.”

I feel that she placed emphasis on ‘at all’.

I wasn’t sure how to reply so I just stood there.

“Whatever. It doesn’t matter, because I’m assigned to the Fourth Knight corps now.”

Wait, you’re the vice-captain’s daughter...? Eh, you don’t look alike at all! The eye color is the same, sure, but you don’t look like him at all! I’ll say it again, they don’t look alike at all!

I wonder how a cute girl is related to the Vice-captain. Perhaps she looks more like her mother.

“I heard that the previous employee was employed for a very long time, so I was curious but she’s ‘this’ huh. I’m tired of looking at you. What a waste of a good hour.”

Ha, I see. Sorry for taking up your time.

The girl turned her back on me and left with a huff.

...e? Do I really look that uncouth?

As a girl (female) I'm kind of worried.

For now, let's consult Ariade later. I saw some lotion in her room when I visited, and her hair is miraculously shiny and soft. And at the same time, I had come to the conclusion that a human girl is a pain to maintain.

TN:

[1] Chiffon was the one who told Vito about this, and Vito mentioning how clumsy Chiffon is implies that Chiffon got into trouble with the Madam often.

[2] Isobe-age is basically mochi wrapped in sea-weed. I believe its usually grilled? It tastes pretty good with soy-sauce.

[3] the whole 'wild' thing probably doesnt make much sense in English, but bear with me here, I have no idea how to translate it into English. If you know sugi-chan and the whole 'wild-daze' joke, its like that. Other wise, i have no idea how to explain it.

[4] Chiffon actually calls her 'oneechan' aka older sister. I just didn't want to put that there, seemed too formal.

[5] Gap-Moe. Ariade has gap-moe.

Dragon Life Chapter 18

Light entertainment and sweet atmosphere. Unbelievable.

Even after that incident, it was very peaceful, to the point of questioning. Is it really okay for it to be this peaceful?

It seems that the Tiruzoto Empire's messenger doesn't come for a while, so it was really peaceful. Yup, as I thought, peace is the best.

"Today there's a once-in-a-month practice match!"

I was taken to the knight's training grounds by Chiffon. Apparently she was here to watch Stefano. No, not him, Chiffon. Absolutely not him. Mom won't let you!

Anyway, I couldn't stop Chiffon as she tugged me along with glittering eyes, and in the end I was practically dragged to the training grounds. It's actually break time right now, so we invited Ariade as well but she cut us down with a 'not interested'. Unn, so cool. I want to be cool too.

The training grounds were a short walk away from the dorms, and was crowded with people. Wha, wait, is this all women? From what I can tell by their clothes, they're all maids and servants. There are even some noble ladies watching from the balconies. Wait, isn't that the prince at the very top over there? Is this actually some sort of country approved event that only I didn't know of? Is that it?

So this becomes my first time seeing a practice match. But.

W h a t i s w i t h t h i s P L A C E ! !

It's almost as if some traveling troupe arrived, full of noise and excitement. Well, the knights probably won't be able to endure training day in and day out while living with similarly sweaty guys if they didn't have something like this. They'll become more enthusiastic if they're being watched by women. It only happens once a month, so I guess it's okay. I have no interest in things that have nothing to do with me. Ah stop. You though I sounded like Stephano, didn't you?

But I never thought that there would be so many women coming to watch the practice matches, since I was always cleaning the dorms at this time. I guess they're really popular because they protect the country.

High pitched cheers of 'kyaa!' was heard. It seems like the previous match ended and knew knights had come into the arena.

"Ah! Look, look, up next is someone from the fourth knight corps!"

What!

After saying that, Chiffon dives through the mass of maids and servants to the front. I was surprised as how she had shrewdly ended up in the very front. It's only times like these that Chiffon can be so calculating.

I decided to watch the match from a tree a distance away from the arena, even though I couldn't see very well but there's less people there. I am actually taller than the average woman around here, so if I forced my way to the front like Chiffon it would be bothersome, and even if I got to the front I would be subject to a lot of booing. Besides, even from here I

can clearly see who's in the training grounds.

———okay, so the next match is...

Its Stefano and the captain. ———captain?

"Kya——Stefano-sama—!"

Eh? Sama?

"You're as gallant as ever!! Please do your best!!"

Eh? Gallant?

"Kya! He looked my way!"

"No he looked at me!"

Wha, don't wink Stefano. What are you, the prince?

... What's with this cheering.

I was watching these girls with a dazed look, but it seems that the captain is being cheered on as well.

"Your hair is as lovely as ever! How did you braid it so nicely!?"

Apparently he does it himself.

"Please let me use your lap as a pillow!!"

Lap pillow?

"Let me touch your smooth skin—!"

... Aren't these turning into personal desires?

"Please wear my dress—!!"

Un, that one I agree with. If he cross-dressed he would be cute. ...eh? Dress?

"Lutoria-sama!! Do your best!!"

That, that. When you talk about cheering that's the norm. Wait, the captain, Lutoria? Ah, yeah. The prince called him that too, didn't he. I had forgotten again. To me the captain has the mental image of 'the captain' and I can't exactly think of him as anyone else.

But hrm, so the captain was quite popular as well. ...Somehow I begin feeling a complex feeling. Ah, I should have eaten him. ^[1]

Anyway, should I be cheering someone on? If I'm going to root for someone, it's definitely going to be the captain. Why should I cheer on the stupid womanizing Stephano? Captain-! Please beat him to a pulp!! I cheered for the captain internally.

Ah- I really want to eat Nassau's food... maybe I'll go there later today.

Dragon riders normally use a long-reaching spear or longsword, but this is a match between humans. They'll probably use the weapon they are most used to.

Stephano has chosen to wield a thin sword. I thought the captain was using a dagger, but if I looked closely he had a blade in each hand so it's probably a pair of short-swords. So he's ambidextrous. You learn something new every day. ^[2]

Both participants got into position, and the knight serving as the referee sent up the sign that both sides were ready, starting the match immediately. At the call of the referee, the previously silent arena exploded into a squealing cheer, and I instinctively covered my ears. It was a miracle as to how the two of them could still go about their match in this noise. While I was thinking this, I followed their movements closely, and quickly became absorbed in the match.

Especially since Stephano's heavy handed attacks are contrasted by the captain's light movements, almost as if he grew a pair of wings. The 'kyaa-kyaa' screaming isn't all that bad. With cool men ^[3] comes high pitched cheering, it's the same in any world.

———I probably won't be able to see those eyes up close anymore. Probably because they're moving a lot, but occasionally I would see those eyes from behind his bangs. ^[4]
Even his hair, which used to be my job to braid, has been taken over by someone else. Even talking to him will become hard now. Thinking back about it now, all that happened feels as if it was all a lie.

Even though we had come into contact so casually before, now there is so much distance between us.

...what is this. It's almost like I'm a maiden in love! No, no. It just that the captain looks so delicious——— ... ah- the captain is so distant, is what I was thinking.

Stephano's blade grazes the captain's head and his hair comes undone. One of the captain's braids slips apart quickly. The captain ignored his now free-flowing hair and instead struck Stephano's now un-guarded chest with his sword. Stephano quickly tried to block, but probably because of the strength in the captain's attack, he was blown backwards.

Ooh, nice. I was very impressed.

———B l o w n b a c k ?

Stephano was blown away brilliantly. Yup, he was blown away to an impossible distance. It even caught some people nearby.

Stephano is slammed against the castle wall, a few meters away from the training grounds, with a loud sound. If he landed badly it could have broken his back, but it seems that Stephano is pretty tough, seeing how he was already up on his own two feet before any of the knights could help him. The fact that I thought 'serves you right' is a secret.

If you try really hard you might be able to get someone to move about 3, 4 meters but he flew about 10 you know? That's not a normal human's strength. The entire area is dead quiet. The captain is also staring at his left arm, as if he doesn't understand what happened either. I also noticed that he was consistently opening and closing his hand.

Aah, dammit...! I shouldn't have given him that arm!!

It's originally a part of my body. It wouldn't be weird even if it could exert that kind of strength.

Since I'm trying to blend in with human society, I've been maintaining my stamina and strength at human levels. That's why I can live normally amongst humans. But the captain knows that it's an arm given to him by a dragon, something that has powers beyond human limits. That's probably why such a large amount of power came out. ^[5]

The onlookers finally snap out of their dazes and begin murmuring 'as I thought the contract —' and I soon gain the overwhelming urge to sigh. I didn't make a contract. I don't even want a contract in the first place, it's too troublesome and a heavy burden.

Please stoopp—.

Suddenly the captain turns his head and looks my way. Our eyes met perfectly.

Even though the captain's eyes were hidden by his bangs as usual, I definitely felt our eyes meet. I somehow ended up taking up a defensive posture. I have a very bad feeling. The captain tilts his head a little bit, but when he realizes it's me, beckons me over.

Eh, why?

Me? Through this horde of women? Go there? Is that what you're saying?
NoNoNoNoNoNo-Impossible!!^[6]

I don't have that kind of courage! I don't want to get involved with relationships with women under normal circumstances!! If I go out there now, I'll definitely be added to their Black-list!!

I felt bad, but I shook my head from side to side and bowed deeply, before escaping with lightning speed. If it's the captain, he would probably forgive me. Or more like forgive me dammit! And let's also pray that you'll forget about me quickly.

Even so, that arm is really troubling. What to do.

I have never regretted the actions of my instinct-influenced self as much as I am regretting it now. ...It was really delicious though.

While I was grumbling about the stupidity of my actions, huh?

—My right arm is strongly tugged backwards. Surprised, I immediately turn around.

"Vito, why did you run."

Uhya. When did you even get behind me?!

I look up at the captain, who pulled my arm, in surprise. I haven't seen him face to face in a while and one of his braids have come undone, but it's definitely the captain. I didn't think he would come chasing after me, and I had let down my guard. The captain looks at me curiously, as if not understanding why I had fled that place at such a speed. Wait, seriously? You don't know why?

"Uhm you know, because I've been transferred to a different assignment."

"Nn-... ah, that's right."

You forgot? And don't speak like you've just remembered.

— Really, what a slow person. ^[7]

It makes me, who was thinking about how distant we've become, seem idiotic. The captain talks to me as usual, and there's a part of me which is relieved by this.

Its kind of complicated. Emotions are difficult.

"So did you need something from me?"

"Hair, came undone, so."

By chance, did you call me over back then just for that? ...You should be able to do that much by yourself. Well, I'll do it anyways since you came all this way and there's no one else here, but still.

I have the captain sit on the bench, and go behind it, accepting the hair tie from him. The captain's hair is soft and nostalgic to the touch, and my mouth is— not salivating. It's not. ... it really isn't, okay?

Ah, I'll take this chance to properly give him my greetings. ^[8]

"Captain, I'm sorry that I didn't properly give my farewells before the assignment change"

"Nn-" ^[9]

"I wanted to go, but I couldn't get the time to do so."

"Nn-"

"It was only for a short while, but thank you."

I complained a lot, but it was really fun. Even waking up the captain every morning, braiding his hair, watching him talk happily about dragons, casually chatting with the vice-captain, worrying about Reina's wounds, watching Stephano get scolded by Rance, and especially

Nassau's food.

It was fun. Every day had a sense of satisfaction to it.

Again, I come to realize that I really liked it there. I really felt at home there.

"Nn-..."

Since I've gotten used to braiding long braids, it was finished quickly. When I tell him 'it's done' he turns around and looks up at me. I caught a glimpse of his black eyes from behind his bangs. In a distantly nostalgic manner, he curls his fingers around my hair and trails his fingers downward, stroking my cheek. It tickles.

"Vito, doesn't say anything"

"...about what?"

"About my eyes."

The captain moves aside his bangs and showed me. The sudden appearance of the captain's eyes is bad for my heart. Out of all the people I've met so far, the captain is the only one that has the black eyes I yearn for. Those very eyes are now reflecting my appearance. However it's not "my" appearance but rather the appearance of "the village girl I ate". I don't remember my true appearance. Knowing that the "me" that is reflected is all but a fabricated lie, I feel a bit depressed and fall into silence. I wonder where the real me is.

...Even so, it looks like I have to say something. He's been remaining silent, waiting for my answer.

"Well, uh, it's beautiful."

Really, it's pretty to the point that it's bad for my heart. Its so nostalgic, it makes me want to hold on to it.

The captain, as if he was suddenly in a good mood, chuckled.

It probably because he blew Stephano away. I can understand. Eh, that's not the reason?

"You're the only person who says things like that, really, Vito."

"Eh? Really?"

It feels like *déjà vu*.

"I mean, black eyes are rare, right? So people, always curious. Lots of people don't like."

So that's why the captain hides his eyes with his bangs. It's amazing how he can move so well with such narrow visibility. Although he does trip sometimes.

But... it seems the captain has things he worries about too. The captain gave such a sad smile that I was reminded that the captain really was human, too.^[10]

"Well... I love..." ^[11]

—eh?

What I was thinking came out of my mouth, and I startled myself.

Eh? EH? Wha, wait that's a confession! No! That's not what I meant!! I just really love that color black! I like it too much! Th-The eye! The irises! The black! I ended up shouting that nonsensical gibberish in a panic.

The captain listened with a blank expression, but smiled softly and gave me a soft 'thank you' Aah how embarrassing. I want to crawl into a hole and disappear! What's with this sweet atmosphere! Agh my red face! Calm down!! And like that I was panicking on my own.

"Strange. Your eyes, very similar."

Apparently he was observing me while I panicked.

I don't want to hear who I'm similar to! If I hear it, I feel like everything would end. I earnestly felt that it really was a good idea to change my assignment.

Aah, dammit.

Whenever I talk to the captain I always end up acting up.

Seriously, what's with that.

So, SUPPRISEEE!! I did it all in one night, are you proud of me? Hahahaha you don't need to be, but I felt like I owed you guys this much. I'll get to answering comments after this. Also this is a new format for the spacing! What do you think? Bad? Good? Tell me and if its bad, I'll go change it back.

Especially tell me if its hard to read. Please. Feedback is always good. Also, what should I have for the front page, is the current fine or should I put the Active projects page first? ... or you know, since I only have Dragon Life up I could just have the Dragon life page as the front page....

TN:

[1] there was a sentence after this that said “なんて思ったりなかったり” which roughly translates to “I might have thought” which didn't seem to make much sense in an English sentence so I left it out.

[2] It actually said “I never knew” but “you learn something new every day” sounded better, haha.

[3] Ikemen always comes with fangirlish screaming.

[4] There's a part added that says that it caused her to feel “shock” or “startled”

[5] basically the captain knows it's a dragons arm, and so that the 'limiter' really isn't there. If he thought it was a human arm, there would be a sort of... mental 'block' I guess? Kind of like how Vito knows she's a dragon but sees her form as human, and maintains the average human strength.

[6] It actually was a line of the repeated kanji 無理 which means impossible, but it could also mean 'no' depending on the context... kind of. No also sounded better than repeating 'impossible' six times.

[7] dull or slow-witted. She doesn't mean it in a bad way, really. It just... exasperated, in a kind of friendly way.

[8] greetings as in a proper farewell, to formally give thanks and things.

[9] basically the equivalent of hmm... but I felt that nn was good enough.

[10] Probably human in a sense that he has feelings/emotions, seeing how the captain is normally portrayed as either dozing off/sleepy or with his emotions under tight control. He

really doesn't express his feelings that openly.

[11] the original text is 「私は・・・好きですよ」 which directly translates to “Well... I like it.” But since the next paragraph is about how it overlaps with a confession, I had to replace it with a half-assed English sentence. SO sorry if it doesn't seem to make much sense.

Dragon Life: Chapter 19

There is a very fine line between weirdo and Cleric. A healing peach color.

I stood there with a hand pressed against the wall, head hanging.

—I ate too much.

Since I was starting to get hungry again so I flew far away to eat some humans but I got carried away and ate 6, twice as much as I usually eat. And since they had a reasonable amount of magical power, I'm beyond full, to the point of throwing up. But it's a waste so I won't throw up! I was going to try moving to get rid of the excess energy, when I was called out to.

"Oh, hello Vito. What are you doing in such a place?"

Its Madeline.

When she notices that I don't look so good, she rushes over and asks me if I'm okay. ...I have eat. Ah, I meant no regrets.[1]

"I'm fine, I just ate a tad too many humans..." is something I definitely cant say so I decided to say "I just feel a tad ill" instead.

"You should go back to your room. Shall I help you?"

"No, no... its fine. If I walk a little bit... it should get better."

"Really? I'm a bit worried..."

"Madeline, what's wrong?"

When I thought that I heard a male voice, standing there was the prince from the other day.

He's sparkling as always. This guy actually does seem pretty tasty but, what do you call it, it's like a cuisine made as an ornament rather than for eating, and it makes me not want to eat him. If I was to make that metaphor simpler, it's like a caviar covered in jewels and perfume. It's a pity because it was something that used to be good. It's a pity, prince. Alright, let's call him disappointing prince from now on.

Wait, does that mean they were walking together? Eh? What kind of relationship does the disappointing prince and Madeline have? Maybe it has something to do with the fact that Madeline is part of the Monrante house. They did say something about her being an 'egg of a magician'.[2]

“Prince LeBlance, since I can’t leave her alone, is it okay if she walks with us?”

“I don’t mind.”

Don’t mind!? Please do mind! What am I going to do if this was a date?! I’m going to be interrupting! [3]

Luckily there’s no one around so I won’t get stared at... Eh, wait, where is this?

I looked around again.

—Where is this. And who am I.

The decorations around here are much more luxurious than the ones at where I usually work. ...This place is definitely outside of our jurisdiction. On my first day at work Miss Milena told me never to enter this place without permission, and that it was not a place for a maid to enter. ...Which means it’s near the royal family’s residence.

Oh no.

It seems that my sense of direction was disoriented by my nausea, and I ended up walking in here by mistake. A shiver runs down my spine.

That was close...! If I was caught then I would have been lectured by Madam, and in the worst case scenario I could have gotten fired! Wait, doesn’t this count as being caught? I glanced at the disappointing prince but he just sent me a damn wink. No stop. I’m super fragile right now, please don’t do that.

“Don’t mind me. Cherishing your friends is very important.”

It seems that he actually believes what he said from the bottom of his heart, and gives me a lovely smile. He’s unexpectedly nice, this disappointing prince. Let’s actually call him prince from now on. Even though I didn’t bow he didn’t shout at or scold me, but instead gives me those kind words. In my head, royalty was an unreachable high class being, be it a power flaunting tyrant or a kind king working for the sake of his country.

But the man before my eyes, prince... er, leb, leburya... Prince LeBlance seems, this is probably really bad to say but uh, he’s like a commoner prince. His appearance is straight out of a fairy tale, a prince in shining armor on a white horse, but perhaps it’s because his base personality is friendly, I never actually feel nervous around him. He’s kind of like a friend’s older brother. But more importantly, where were these two going to go, all alone?

“Vito, why don’t you come with us to see the Cleric? If it is them, they could surely cure your sickness.”

Cleric?

So there was such a person in this country!

“By Cleric...”

“They’re the only person in this country that can use healing magic. They’re even called a prophet.”

Now that I think about it, I know nothing about this world or country. Maybe I’ll try reading a history book when I get the chance. Aah, but I’m bad with textbooks. I wasn’t very good at studying and my grades weren’t very good. ...Hey, rather than reading a boring history book, wouldn’t it be better if I just go meet this cleric person and see what they’re like myself?

I can just skip the hassle of investigating. Hey, I’m pretty smart.

Isn’t this surprisingly okay? No matter how you look at me I’m an average servant girl. If they can get rid of this nauseating feeling, of course I’ll go!

There was a time that I thought like that too.

I had felt so ill, to the point that I would make such a foolish decision.

And the cleric, they were one heck of a pretty woman.

The room was made of marble and there was not a single window in the room. The most surprising thing was that the entire area was flooded with water. The water actually went up to my waist. Aa the water is flooding out!! I thought and paused at the doorway but i was surprised to see Madeline and the Prince enter the room without hesitation.

What the hell-! I screamed internally and scooped up the water, only to spill it. I repeated the process until Madeline grabbed my wrist with a bitter smile and dragged me to the center of the room.

Sorry Madeline. I don’t think my brain can keep up with this situation. Please forgive me.

In the center of the room there was a circular open area. Maybe there is an invisible wall there after all? In the first place, is this even real water?

Standing there in the fountain within this circular space with straight, long flowing silver hair, was the Cleric. Their hair fell and melted into the fountain, and at first i thought the hair was just soaking in the water but looking carefully it seems like the hair and water is merged.

You can’t move if your hair’s like that you know.

When I asked Madeline later, it turns out that the cleric really can’t move. Apparently they’ll die if they move, or something. What kind of catch is that?

Up to my chest in height and with very youthful features, I feel like they're a bit too young. Are you really alive? They had a really mysterious feeling to them, and not to mention—he was a boy.

I was really surprised.

Wait, aren't clerics normally women? Apparently my thoughts were prejudiced, for before me was a boy cleric. I wouldn't be surprised if they were a girl though, but their chest is too flat! They were wearing something like a white dress but there was NO chest! None! It was more like a sheer cliff than a cutting board [], but even more surprising was their voice. It was that of a boy after puberty, the voice fully deepened and everything.

Where the heck is that voice coming from...! His appearance is of a young boy, his voice is of an man... how strange. In addition, it seems that he's actually lived over a thousand years. Are you really human? Definitely not, right? right?

Should it really be this easy to meet with the living fossil of this country!? When I asked it turns out that even commoners can meet with him, as long as you do the proper paperwork. How anticlimactic. But apparently people get too intimidated so he rarely has visitors. Huh, no wonder I've never heard about this. Well it's understandable how people would find him unapproachable, seeing how he's lived for a thousand years.

"Oh hey, if it isn't the prince. What business do you have with me today?"

His grin was similar to that of a goddess's smile. It's beautiful, but too beautiful to the point that it makes him seem unearthly, almost as if he isn't living.

"It's about the Tiruzoto Empire's messenger. You've heard the news, right?"

"What I want is to have a silly little talk, that humans regularly do. It wouldn't hurt to go along with me, right?"

"Whenever I go along with one of your talks it usually takes about three nights. Please, let's do that at a later date instead."

"How harsh. Fufufu, I know what you want to say, prince. Please be reassured."

Talking to this guy seems really tiring. Good luck, prince! Fight!!

"Oh, and the Egg of A Magician, you are beautiful today as well."

"It has been a while, sir cleric."

"If possible I would like to gift my song to you—"

"Don't even try." [don't flirt.]

"... How rude of you, prince. All I want to do is admire beautiful things. Or perhaps you're jealous? Fufufu, I am always on your side, prince." [devoted]

The prince lets out a long sigh. This is coming from the prince who winks at anyone regardless! It seems like everyone has a person that's hard to deal with. I understand that feeling, i really do.

Moreover, you just said the Tiruzoto Empire and its messenger, right? Is that what you were coming here to talk about? Is it really okay if i'm here?

"Sir cleric, before that, can you take a look at her? It seems that she's not feeling well."

While i was wondering if it was really okay to come with them, Madeline spoke up.

Is this the get-fixed-up-quickly-and-leave flag? And when I leave you're probably gonna have an important conversation. I have no idea how you're gonna fix me up, but as soon as i'm better i just gotta leave, right? I can read the atmosphere, so please do so by all means.

I was pushed forward by Madeline.

———It was instantaneous.

"Oh?"

The cleric looked at me and gave me a smile that obviously had an underlying meaning to it.

—a shiver ran down my spine, the hairs on the back of my neck stood up. I immediately followed my instincts and put up my guard.

The cleric looked at me, with my over-the-top smile, as if he could see right through it with those silver eyes. What, what.... what in the world? This is bad. This is really bad! Really completely bad!! I want to leave, I want to leave right now!! I want to run away from here!

My instincts were alerting me to danger.

It was like the unmistakable feeling of meeting a predator.

"Come this way"

A slender hand reached towards me. I have to take his hand. If I don't the prince and Madeline might become suspicious of me. But I don't want to go. Don't want to Don't want to Don't want to. An unknown feeling wells up in me and I feel even worse than before. I'm sweating. And then Madeline pushes on my back and I stumble forwards.

As I hesitated, over thinking about taking the outstretched hand, he brought his face closer.

He brought his silver eyes with my image reflected to point blank range. *gulp*

— — — . . . that appearance is?

In a moment I saw “my appearance” in his eyes, the one I had been searching for. The “human-me”. Black hair. Black eyes. Black uniform. It was “Me”.

But it was only a moment, and then it vanished. Reflected in his eyes was my current form. I couldn’t clearly see it, the face as well.

But there was no mistake. That was “me”.

“hmmm, this is rare, isn’t it”

“ — — ! ”

“Don’t be alarmed. I don’t bite.”

“It’s like you isn’t it”, having been told that, alarm bells are going off in my head.

Police cars and ambulances, the siren of a fire truck, the sound of a railroad crossing, the sound when you get caught on the ticket gate, a house’s doorbell and the school’s first bell, the phone’s ringtone and the notification sound of cellphones, the sound of a car backing up, the sound of an alarm clock. All sounds from my human memory.

These sounds run noisily in my head.

—- this person, do they know? That.... i’m a dragon?

Why? How? Because they lived a thousand years? What kind of ability is that?

“So its already been a hundred years, time really does fly by. But really, how strange... ‘Who’ exactly are you? In the future i predicted ‘you’ did not exist. But this actually might turn out to be interesting. It sure seems like it. Aa, yes i’m looking forward to this. Aren’t you? Of course you are.”

The finger that strokes my trembling hand is cold. With a spellbound smile he talks and states his observations to himself. What the heck is this person. A standup comedian who can do a nori-tsukkomi? [6]

“But, hm yes. I see.”

He continues to stare into my eyes.

With those silver eyes that look like they can see right through me he was even still so close to my face we were almost touching noses. I couldn’t move, my whole body froze up like a stone, I couldn’t move a muscle. Because he lowered his voice like it was a secret meeting, The prince and Madeline probably couldn’t hear anything. I want them to hear and I don’t want them to hear.

If I knew something like this was going to happen, I wouldn't have eaten that much!

It's kind of late to be realizing that.

The cleric dropped the smile.

[I can only tell you this. —you will eventually die.]

On what authority are you telling me this!! Are you my shinigami?! In reality are you not a cleric, but a shinigami? Even if you say it like that, it's still technically correct!

[Y-Yes. I will definitely someday die. Because of biology.]

My voice quivered, but I managed to say it.

[Ha ha ha, it's not like that. I probably said it poorly. You may die, you may live, it depends on which road you follow. That's what I mean]

Isn't the substance completely different? Aren't you playing around too much cleric?! It's a matter of life and death for me!

[On both paths despair awaits you, both paths shimmer with hope. Which you choose, that is up to you.]

Well I would choose to live over dying by all means. But your words are too vague. And apparently you're a seer too but that's something that anyone can say that applies to everyone.

"I-If you can see into the future, why don't you, look into the future and just, win the war?"

"That's true, but the future is a fickle thing. The things i read into can only serve as a consolation. There has been plenty of times when I was wrong. In short—"

"You're not omnipotent."

Like a weather forecaster.

"well~ it just means that in the end, the future depends on you"

The cleric gave me a bitter smile that seemed to say 'saying i'm not omnipotent, you're pretty harsh despite your looks, huh?'.

Doesn't that mean there's no point in reading the future? My life is decided by my choices. However it feels kind of strange, having that said to my face.

Kinda like i've been deceived by a fortune teller.

In short, its up to me.

AKA, its up to my feelings.

Thats not advice you know.

"But you've already made up your mind, correct?"

Aa, that's right.

But there's that undeniable feeling that I've been cajoled.

"Fufufufu, don't worry. I am very friendly to 'your kind'."

Who is 'my kind'? I really don't want to ask. I don't want to ask, but it really bugs me. Wait, if this guy has really lived for a thousand years, doesn't that mean he's met the previous ones?

The question arises, but if I ask, that would be basically confirming I'm a dragon. I don't want that.

"They do, determined their own fate. I don't know how you will end up, just make sure you live with no regrets."

The last thing he did was gently kiss my cheek.

"Also, try not to over-eat so much."

Wha- How did you know why i was feeling so sick...?! That's embarrassing!

I let out an internal scream at the sensation on my cheek, but was surprised to notice that I no longer felt sick.

"Feel free to come again if you have any questions."

My face slips. [7] The rigidity in my body disappears as i quickly retreat from the spot.

I was worried about the Cleric telling the prince, but he only laughs brightly and brings his pointer finger to his lips.

『I won't tell a soul』

He mouths to me.

... What is your objective. He definitely has some ulterior motive! A bribe!? I don't have that much money!

"Vito, are feeling better?"

“...yeah”

I feel better but I’m mentally exhausted. But I can’t show that, so I pull up some energy.

“Thanks. I’m feeling better, so I’ll head back. Besides, you have some important business here, right? It seems like I’m in the way.”

“Don’t worry about it. Besides, the talk will end quickly, so if you could just wait outside a little, I’ll walk you back.”

I reassured the worried Madeline and slipped through the not-wet water, exiting the room.

“Prince LeBlanche, I’m sorry I got in the way.”

“Don’t worry about it”

In actuality, I just didn’t want to be there. I wanted to get out of that room, even one second earlier the better. I felt Madeline’s worried gaze on my back, but i quickly fled the room.

The Cleric is a strange person. I don’t even know if they’re really human. And they are definitely a weirdo. ... I’m tired.

They seem to know that I’m a dragon and said they won’t tell anyone, but its impossible to predict what they will do. Am I going to have to fearfully spend every day terrified of what he might do? ... He grabbed my strongest weakness. [8]

But wait.

Even if the fact that I’m a dragon is revealed, can’t i just act innocent?

Eeehh– what? I’ve never heard of such a thing. Me? A dragon? Ahahahah that’s impossible! Like that. No no no, I don’t know how much power the cleric’s word has, but it’s possible that I will be suspected. ... what the hell am I supposed to do? When I think of the future, all I can do is sigh. ...Besides the cleric was... inedible? Rather it was more like the Cleric could eat me. That’s how I felt. Uwaa, scary.

I suddenly really want to go see the captain. [9]

I wonder why.

* * *

While i'm walking back to my room, someone ahead is walking towards me.

Its the vice-captain's daughter.

...I wonder why. After talking to the Cleric, just meeting someone else soothes me. Peach colored hair is really girly and cute. Even though she bad mouthed me, just seeing her brings relief to my heart like a spring breeze.

But i feel like she actually doesn't look so good. As soon as our eyes meet, she makes a disgusted face and walks by.

"uhm"

When I call out to her, she takes a few steps before stopping. She makes a grumpy face at me, but at least she didn't ignore me.

"What. If you have no business with me, don't call out to me."

I did have some business with her, that's why i called out. I hurriedly pull out a small pink bag from my pocket. It's a drawstring bag with its opening tightly shut. I really want to be nice to someone right now.

"Here. For you."

"...hah?"

"Its a potpourri bag. Just hanging this from your neck helps a lot. Please take it, if you'd like."

Her pale face is probably because of the Fourth knights corps' dormitory. It seems like it was worse than usual because it was flight training today. But since i always had this on me, I didn't mind it as much. There also were delicious smelling people... and that was the dragon side of my brain. But since the Vice captain has been making people shower after training, saying that it's bad for hygiene, it should be better than before.

I told her I dont need it anymore, but she slapped it away with the back of her hand.

"I dont need it. Why should I accept a hand-me-down from you?"

"Really?.... But you don't look so good."

She looks like she might faint. I'm a little worried.

Since the vice captain is of noble blood, she probably had a pretty good upbringing. She's more suited to a higher, more flashy job like a maid rather than a cleaning job like ours. Should a girl her age really be doing such a harsh job just because she wants to work in the same place as her father?

Do you have a father complex, huh? Well they do say that the Lieutenant is a doting father. It's not like I can't understand how he feels. She's super cute. Almost a waste to eat.

"... you're persistent. I get it already."

Seemingly getting annoyed with how I was still holding out the potpourri bag, she snatches it out from my extended hand. That's good. I don't know if she'll actually use it, but at least she accepted it.

"Don't talk to me anymore. Annoying."

She harrumphs and turns on her heel, heading the same way she was heading before.

Wouldn't it have been better if she went and saw the Cleric rather than me? She looks ill.

...recalling earlier, I shudder.

If possible, I don't want to see him ever again.

I can finally understand why everyone gets scared and doesn't want to meet him anymore.
TL NOTES:

[1] She said [・・・食いはある。ああ、間違えた、悔いは無い。] which is a pun on words, since eat (kui・食い) and Regret (kui・悔い) has the same pronunciation.

[2] there's probably a better English translation for this, but it means like she is still an egg/seed, but she will grow into a magician. Yeah.

[3] She actually says she's a bothersome bug, or an interrupting bug, but that just sounds weird.

[4] a reference to the common saying 'their chest was as flat as a cutting board'

[5] another translation would be 'don't flirt' or 'don't play around'

[6] nori-tsukkomi is a type of tsukkomi where you go along with the joke at the beginning, but then point out how ridiculous it actually is

[7] Her expression slips, shatters, her face becomes blank, there's a lot of ways this can be interpreted.

[8] vito had 'a terrible weakness grasped by the cleric' but that sounds pretty weird. So its more along the lines of, the cleric having caught onto her greatest weakness? I guess?

[9] The word 無性 is included here, which means asexual or neutral. It could mean Vito considers the captain 'neutral' or harmless, or it could mean that the attraction (aka the want to see feelings) is associated with no romantic (or sexual) feeling on vito's end. Its a

weird word.

DRAGON LIFE – CHAPTER 19

Part 2

Do you mean this is a FLAG for me to get healed and quickly leave this place? And once I leave they will have their important conversation. It 's not like it's in exchange of getting healed, but isn't it good if I can receive treatment and immediately leave this room? It's okay because I can read the atmosphere. Please let's definitely go with that.

I stepped closer before Madeleine could push me forward.

— It was at that moment.

“Oh?”

Sir Cleric looked at me, flashing a meaningful smile which contained a piece of his thoughts.

—A-a-a-a c-chilling cold runs through my spine, my hair stands on end. Going by my instinct, I had to bare my wariness.

Deepening his smile at my reaction, with those silver pupils which seem to see through everything, he smiles. ...What's with that? Heck, what's this? dangerous. This is dangerous! Too dangerous!! I want to run away right now!! I want to run away from here!

My instinct was warning me that it was dangerous.

It is a feeling like meeting a very dangerous predator.

“Come here.”

He reached out a slender hand. I stretched out slowly my faintly trembling hand.

I must take his hand. If not it would be suspicious to the Prince and Madeleine who are behind. But, I don't wanna go near him. I don't wanna go don't wanna go don't wanna go. It feels worst than earlier when that odd feeling was burning in me. I break out in cold sweat. But being pushed from the back by Madeleine, I come stumbling forward like before.

And while thinking of taking his hand with this hesitant hand that I was about to extend, his face comes closer.

In those close up silver pupils "I" had been reflected. I, take a breath.

— ... That, “appearance” was.

Inside those pupils, only for a moment “my appearance” which I intently searched for was reflected, that “human me”.

With black hair, black eyes, wearing a black uniform, it was “me”.

But it disappeared in an instant, the me inside the pupils went back to having my actual form. My face, too, couldn’t be seen very well.

But no doubt. It was “me”.

“Ooh, this is unusual.”

“-!”

“Please do not be wary. Because I won’t eat you no matter what.”

As if being said ‘Like you would’, inside of my head every kind of alarm was resounding.

Police cars and ambulance, fire truck siren, the sound of the railroad crossing, the sound of a train gate ticket that got stuck, the chime of a house and school’s first bell, the sound of a ringing telephone and mobile phone ringtones, cars’ back sound, the alarm clock sound. All of them were sounds from my human memories.

They were resounding within my head from the depths of my soul (tn: no idea if this sentence’s right, because idk wth is ketatamashiku, i’m assuming it has something to do with her soul, but... それが頭の中でけたたましく鳴り響いていた)

— This person, he knows? I, that I’m ... a dragon?

Why? How come? Is it because he has lived for 1000, it’s that kind of ability?

“It will already have been 100 years. The flow of time is fast. But it is really strange. ... “Who” are you? In the future that I’ve read “you” do not exist. But this might also be fun. It seems it will become something interesting. Aah, how fun. Right? Yeah, right.”

The fingers stroking my trembling hands are cold. Making a moonily laughing face, he has completed a monologue on his own. What’s wrong with this person. Is he a PIN entertainer that can cross tsukkomi? (tn: no idea what a pin entertainer is, nor no idea if the sentence s right as a whole xD: ノリツツコミができるピン芸人か)

“But, yes. I see.”

Still it is a stare at the inside of my pupils.

Again those silver irises, such that can see through all that there is, approach until our noses might bump into each other; I was still in place, my whole body could not move as if it

solidified into stone. I wonder what the others are talking about, because it seems that they are having a secret talk. I want them to notice, yet I do not want them to notice.

If it was going to turn this way then I wouldn't have eaten so much!

It's too late to regret now.

Erasing his smile, Sir Cleric said.

"There's only one thing that I can tell you. —The day will come where you will die."

What are you saying!! Are you my shinigami?! The truth is you are actually not something like a Cleric but a shinigami, right. If I was told so I'd believe it.

"O- of course I'll die someday. Because, I'm a living being."

Turning his words around I was finally able to let my voice out.

"Hehehe, that's not what I meant. Maybe my choice of words was bad. Will you die, will you live, it will be such that you will have to follow one of these paths. That is what I wanted to say."

Isn't the whole content different! Isn't this Sir Cleric way too playful! It's a matter of life-or-death for me! "In either path there awaits you despair, in both paths hope is shining. To decide between them, is up to you."

I'll choose the path to live by all means. The way things were said is too vague though. It is said he's like a prophet, but the things he said can be said to anyone, and can be said by anyone.

"I-if you are going to read the future, then reading the future of this country, during war, would be good to win."

"That's right. But the future is something that changes. Even the things I've read are naught but a consolation. In short, they also didn't come true many times until now." (tn: not sure about this one: 今までも何度も外れて来ましたし)

"You are not omniscient." (tn: it says universal, but where in the world does that make sense...)

He is like a weather forecaster.

"Well it's like that however, it is said that the future is something that depends on oneself, after all."

Sir Cleric, despite his appearance when saying something serious like 'the future that pertains me is not universal', smiles wily. (T/N: it took me a while to understand this. resuming, he means 2 things: he can't perceive every possible futures because the future he sees is dependant on himself and, the actions he takes won't affect everybody even if he

intervenes, which explains a bit of why he hadn't seen Vito in his readings. besides that, the whole paragraph might be wrong).

Saying that, is it that there's no meaning in doing those readings? My life is determined by my choices. Somehow it feels strange to be told that again.

I feel that I have been deceived by a fortune-teller.

In short, it depends on ourselves.

In short, it depends on one's own feelings.

That is, it wasn't said as an advice.

"But you have the resolution to do it, right." (said by Vito, probably xD)

Well, yes but.

Mmh, the feelings that have been forcibly rounded up are undeniable.

"Hehehe, it is okay. I'm very friendly to 'you guys'."

Who are those "you guys". I do not want to hear it. I do not want to hear it but it makes me anxious. If this man has really been alive for a 1000 years, doesn't he know those from the past?

It arises some suspicions in me, but if I ask about it it will be a confirmation of me being a dragon. I'd hate that.

"They too decided by their own will so, I don't know what will become of you but so that you don't regret it."

At last he placed a kiss to my cheek.

"Eating too much, you should do it in moderation."

Now I know why I was feeling so bad...! it's too embarrassing!!!

At the sensation on my cheek, within my heart a scream was raised, but I was surprised at discovering that the mysterious and wrong feeling was getting better.

"Please come to my place at any time if there is anything that you want to know."

His face goes away. The rigidity of my body fades, and I quickly retreat away from the spot I was at.

As I was worrying about 'what if he talks of this to the prince', Sir Cleric brings his index finger towards his lips while laughing brightly, saying,

"I won't tell anyone."

It made my mouth open and close like a fish's. (tn: it says it made her mouth go pakupaku,

lol)

... What is his purpose. I can't think of anything else other than there being another side to this! Is it a bribe!? I am not that rich!

"Vito, are you alright now?"

"...Yup"

My health became alright but I'm mentally tired. But I pump myself up since I won't show that kind of image.

"Thank you. I got better, so I'll return. And besides you'll have an important talk, right? So I'll go since it seems I'll just be a bother."

"It's fine. Since the talk will be over soon, if you wait for me outside I'll send you back to your room."

Saying 'It's fine already' to the still worrying Madeleine, I start leaving by skimming through the room of the water that doesn't wet.

"Prince LeBlanche, I'm sorry to have bothered you."

"Don't mind it."

My real meaning is, I did not want to stay here. Sooner by even one second I wanted to be out of this room. I felt on my back Madeleine's worried gaze, but I left the room like fleeing.

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People like Sir Cleric are mysterious people. You can't tell whether they are actually human or not. And he's a weirdo. I'm tired.

It looks like it was known that I'm a dragon, and to that he said, "I won't tell anyone" yet, it's not like I can know what will happen from now on. I wonder if it will become a situation where I'll live everyday in fear while worrying about it... I get the feeling that he got a hold on an unthinkable weakness.

But, wait.

Even if it is discovered that I'm a dragon isn't it fine if I just play dumb?

'Eeeh what's that I don't know. Me, a dragon? Ahaha there's no way that's possible, right?' Like that. No, no, but I don't know how much weight do Sir Cleric's words have, there's the possibility of being suspected. ...What the hell should I do. For the sake of thinking about the things to come made want to sigh. ...and what's more, Sir Cleric was kinda... not a

target for eating. It's more like it's me the one who is an edible target. That's the feeling it gave me. Aah, I'm afraid.

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Somehow I wanted to meet the Captain very much.

I wonder why.

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Someone comes walking from the front as I return to the room.

It's the vice captain's daughter.

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...Why is this? After meeting with Sir Cleric I feel like I'll be healed by any person. She's cute with that peach colored hair that is so girly. After being told those curse-like words, my heart feels refreshed like meeting the first wind of a spring storm.

But her figure is dispirited and her face color looks a little bad. She went past with a nasty face while keeping her eyes on me.

"Wait" (tn: she said 'Ano', which is a way to call out to someone, but it's not as rude as 'hey'...)

She kept walking a few steps and stopped at hearing my voice. The only good thing is that she did not ignore me even when making a grumpy face.

"What. Don't talk to me if you have no reason."

I talked to you because there's a reason, I take out the small pink bag from my pocket in a hurry. It is a bag with drawstring mouth that is squeezed shut. It's because I'm ardently feeling like being kind to someone right now.

"This, please."

"... Huh?"

"It's a scent bag. Please, if it's take it if it's fine with you, because it will be completely different even though it's just hanging from the neck."

I'm sure the reason her complexion is bad is due to the specific 'that' from the fourth Knight

Corps dorms. In particular, it seems today was terrible or because it was a flight training. But I did not mind as I always wore and looked at this. Rather, that person who was making that delicious smell over there... The one saying that was my dragon brain. and most recently, in order to encourage me, the vice captain who wouldn't immediately take a shower and even had a bad hygiene over-all wasn't as terrible as before.

I held it out to her because I do not use it anymore, but she repelled it with the back of her hand.

"I do not need it. Who is would want to get some hand-me-down from you."

"Is that so? Even so your complexion looks fairly bad."

She might collapse with things as they are. I'm a little worried.

Because the vice captain was certainly of noble origin this child probably also had a reasonably good living. In the first place she is a person who would do a more flashy work, unlike the lowly work we do or a maid-like work. (tn: this may be all wrong, lol そもそも私達のような下の仕事ではなくメイドさんのようなどちらかというと目立つ仕事をする人なのだろうが.) But just for her to say that she wants to work at her father's workplace, it's a place that is full of tough jobs for an adolescent girl, isn't it?

A father-con, is that it? Well let's say the vice captain is doting on her. It is not that I do not understand his feelings. She's sssso cute. To the point it's not an exaggeration to eat her.

"...How insistent. I got it already."

Even when I'm still holding out the scent bag, maybe to cut through the stillness, she went and took the scent bag from my hand like she was wresting it off. That's great. I don't know if she will use it but she has accepted it for now it seems.

"Don't talk to me anymore, please. You are annoying."

'Hmph', she snorts and walks away towards the back in the same manner as before.

Would it not be better for her to go see Sir Cleric? She doesn't look good.

...Recalling that, I shuddered.

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I do not want anymore to meet him again if possible. I found the reason why everyone is scared to meet with him.

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Translator's lair:

ufufufufu, I found a nice page to translate complicated terms which google sensei translates a bit off~

<http://www.japandict.com/>

発言力 – those kanji, google sensei says they are “to say”. To say, my ass. “forcefulness of speech, influential voice”, is what it should be. (and then i went and transformed it to fix the context, lol).

I hope that page helps a lot of people!

also... how come that last part about the father-con daughter was harder to translate than the whole old-lolishota-cleric-sama part?!?!?! and just where is she cute? i wanna hit her for being mean to dragon-chan. dragon-chan is cuteness.

...and damn japanese grammar. i bet they made their grammar this way just so that you were forced to translate everything word by word. ;_;"

sorry for there being so so many translator notes. that's just the way things are~☆

Dragon Life Chapter 20

Chapter 20

Four servant girls + α. However KnightS are included.

Chapter 20

Four servant girls + α. However KnightS are included.

As planned, today I was supposed to go with Madeleine and the girls to play in the castle town, just us four.

But.

How did this happen.

Since I didn't have clothes other than my uniform, I was the first to arrive, wearing dark red colored clothes.

It seems that when I eat town girls I can always change into their clothes. I wonder if it's because I ate them after all? Although I still don't understand the point of it very well, it is fine because it is convenient. I'm very grateful because I'm not naked when I turn from dragon to human. I wonder if this is also magic. Mmh, too omnipotent.

Ariade has wore a thin shawl over a light blue one-piece. Chiffon is wearing her best dress with a lot of orange frills. Madeleine is also wearing the same thing as chiffon, looking at them like this, they really are twins, aren't theee-.....ey, and then, why are Stefanos and Lance present next to them. Especially Stefanos. Ochre trousers and a dark blue shirt, it's rough-looking, but because it looks like an outfit of someone who won't take anything sincerely in contrast to a knight's uniform, no matter how you look at him he gives off nothing but the image of a suspicious oniisan (tn: as a young adult who's older than you). Like he's going to hit on girls on the street. And compared to him, Lance, wearing a stylish coat over a white shirt and gray pants, is a good young man from the city no matter from where you look at him! It's more likely he will be the one getting hit on.

But, why are these two people here?

The four of us were trying to go to the castle town, but we met with them who are on vacation by chance. Or not just by chance? Isn't it too suspicious?

I knew it from before, 'OH!! Isn' this a great chance? Could it be that we are tied by the red string of fate?' Is this the strategy? Isn't it like that, Stefanos. And, the other party is Chiffon? (tn: Stefanos didn't actually said that, this is just a dragon girl's imagination, i think xD.)

— I won't give her to you! I absolutely won't give Chiffon to you! Is she someone who should be given out?!

While I glared at him fixedly, he directed an evil-like prideful smile at me.

"To escort princesses, isn't it something inherent to a Knight?"

"... I'm sorry. But I did try to stop him."

An apologetic Lance says.

We know so it is okay. Lance's always working hard. And thank you for coming with us as a lookout.

"Hey hey, Vito-chan! I think that it may be fate or something to be able to meet Sir Stefanos!"

"Fa-, fate?"

Oy, wait up Chiffon. Don't jump to conclusions!

But, him who shrewdly overheard our secret talk, Stefanos surrounds her waist standing next to the Chiffon while grinning. It's not her shoulder but her waist so it is downright erotic. (tn: I'm guessings that's from her japanese girl's mind PoV, lol. I'd call that sensual, not erotic, but yes, seeing as japanese see a casual kiss on the cheek as something really intimate...)

"Isn't it so, Little Chiffon. Won't you try going on a date with me?"

"Eh!?"

Chiffon's face became red with a PON sound.

"Stefan ...!"

"Oh, I'm scared. Don't glare at me with that face. You'll ruin your beautiful face, Lance."

That's what I want to say. Please don't go grinning away with such a precious beautiful face. Because it'll be cooler if you kept quiet. Probably.

"Sir Stefanos, I wonder if I may also go with you. Or would I bother you?"

Madeleine was, from before, showing a behaviour like she was thinking about something, does this mean she likes Stefanos?

“Ain’t it fine? It’s perfectly OK to admire the flowers grow.”

Don’t go grinning around, you worst-kind-of-perverted womanizer! In my mind Stefanos’ stokes met a Big Crash.

(tn: it’s a big crash for me too, I wanted a reverse harem here ;n; don’t steal the spotlight, Stefanos!)

Even though I believed we could have a precious fun time with just us four. Ariade also heaved a sigh at being caught by this terrible trouble maker. As I was depressed Madeleine whispers to my ear.

“How could we even shop leisurely if we are with Stefanos? We’ll meet with you later so you can have fun, ok!”

Such a kind child...! Is it possible she had come forward and said she wanted to tag along as well for that sake? To think first about her friends and even sacrificing herself, it makes you wish she was emulated by someone.

“Let me go with you as well.”

“No, Sir Lance should go with Vito and Ariade for me. If even you tag along it will surely develop into a fight and we will not be able to do any shopping. And the role to protect a younger sister lays in the elder sister. It’s fine, I’m accustomed to dealing with men. Especially so with people such as those guys.”

I was told she was working from the time she was a 12-year-old in the First Knight Corps dormitory, for her to say that dealing with the men on the street is her forte. How brave.

“Changing the subject, I put a mark on the locations of the shops that I recommend.”

I had in my hands a map of the castle town that I had been given which was folded in four. Madeleine said ‘thank you’ and hurried to the place were they’ll meet Stefanos.

When opening the map, it was full of circle marks throughoutit.This, I wonder if the plan was to go around all these later today.

“Did Madeleine do all these?”

“Yeah, she said those are the shops she recommends.”

“She really did mark a lot... She was really looking forward to this.”

When my thoughts swim towards Madeleine who was so looking forward to today and all these circle marks, somehow I become sad. Even if Stefanos hadn’t come, would we be able to visit all these circled locations if it was just the four of us.

“...I’m really sorry.”

I pat Lance’s slightly high shoulder in silence.

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“Wait, Vito, surely you are not going to buy that.”

“What? Is it wrong?”

“No matter how you look at it those are men clothes! Girls don’t wear things like trousers.”

I was robbed of the pants that were in my hands, and they were returned to their original location. Ah, my pants... Pants are great. Whatever shape they have they are fine. Pants are so versatile. Always wearing one-piece type skirts like this, my lower half feels insecure. At least I want to wear some shorts underneath. I always wore them in my time as a student. However my older brother would boo me with a “I won’t forgive you for wearing shorts or the like under your skirt!” Hm? Could it be my brother was a pervert... Th-there’s no way.

“I’ll choose something for you, so sit still over there.”

When I was trying to look for pants again, I was forced to sit on a chair with a tired sigh.

Here seems to be Ariade’s favourite taylor. There’s everyday clothes aligned all over the place, elegant clothes such as dresses are nowhere to be seen. It seems that’s the specialty of other shops. Apparently Ariade had gone to a small party previously, and already owns a few dresses. I want to see the fully dressed up Ariade. She should look really pretty, right? Won’t she wear them for me.

As expected the clothes Ariade brought to spruce me up were all skirts. Feeling depressed while saying ‘Are pants wrong...’, I had to choose from the things that were brought over with much trouble for me.

“How is it? I think this yellow shade is good. It’s a color that’s in vogue now, and you almost didn’t wear bright colors before, right? And such a flashy color, the time to use it is now.”

“Then by all means, you should have it.”

“I’m fine. Because we are choosing clothes for you this time, so go on, choose?”

I was intercepted when I wanted to say, ‘I want to see the one you are wearing’.

In terms of color, yellow, blue, purple, white and green, there were five kinds. Again it seems the women of this world do not wear clothes other than one-piece types that have the upper and down parts connected. The form also is similar, they are just slightly different. There seems to be many variations in ribbons and frills, lace or the over color for the one-piece types. Hm, that said, I don't care either way so I'm doubting about what should I choose. I want to refrain from colors so flashy and close to the primary colors such as yellow and purple. Blue or something similar may be good because they are sober colors, but I thought it looks too alike to the uniform that we employees are always wearing. Then there is no meaning in buying this. Then I'm troubled over choosing between green and white. I thought it may be better to refrain from white because it gets dirty soon.

Green was left after the elimination method.

— Green, reminds me very much of the captain.

Even then, if you say this color is a different color, then it is different, because these clothes are of a heavy dark green.

I think it's good that the color is inconspicuous, but also it feels like there are a lot of laces and frills.

"Aren't there a little too many frills?"

"It is like that. Because the others have even more frills."

Now's fashion seems to be for thing to be decorated lavishly with frills and lace. The young ladies at the castle always wear amazing dresses. Could they be said to be princesses' dresses, such as the rococo style. I had a friend who had such a hobby.

I have a bitter memory about when she almost caught me for a photo session. I told you I don't suit that style.

"Yeah, it suits you."

"Eeh really?"

"Doesn't it, Sir Lance?"

Why talk to Lance with such a timing?

Lance's had been hanging around the store in a restless when he was talked to. Isn't it because of that. This is the type of shop for women only which usually men won't enter. Even when we told him to wait for us outside, he came in together with us.

"O, Oh, it does suit you beautifully."

Isn't he feeling forced to say that? But I'll choose this one because this is troublesome. Also it's price is affordable.

When I was going to take it off, Ariade said 'Anyhow, let's return,' so it turned out that I went back while wearing it. The clothes I was wearing before were put in the bag where the clothes I had bought were supposed to go, and it became such that Lance was carrying it for me.

He's a gentleman!

I want to prepare a drink with just a small part of Lance and make a certain someone drink it. (tn: it says 'to decoct the dirt under his nail' lol. the dirt under the nail: something negligible, or a small part of something'... if kept literal it sounds horrid, lol)

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Since things like stalls also exist here, Ariade halted when walking. I also got in mood and looked into it, there were a lot of hair ornaments of different colors lined up. I wonder if all these are handmade, amazing. How are they made.

"Oh, cute."

"Miss, what do you think about something like this?"

"I wonder if it's not a little too flashy?"

"There's no such thing. I'm sure it would look good on your blonde hair!"

In my case, I glued my eyes to one of the hair ornaments. It has a red stone embedded in a white artificial flower, it's much smaller than the palm of my hand, so it looks cute. (tn: let's recall that Vito is a white dragon with red eyes, in case someone doesn't remember. fitting ornament, right?)

When I was looking fixedly at it and thinking 'I have seen this somewhere before,' Lance picked up the hair ornament.

"This please"

So he said.

And he held the hairpin that he just bought out to me with a Madame Killer smile.

"...Uhm?"

“It’s a minimal atonement for today. Won’t you let me give you a present?”

I said, ‘Well then, to Ariade too’, however.

“I’ll be fine. Since it will be a shame (because it has already been bought), shouldn’t you just receive it?” (tn: unsure about this~ せつかく is a troublesome word >_> and the author used it a lot this chapter.)

She said with an unusually big smile. ...Isn’t she plotting something? Is it my imagination? I feel bad because it was bought for me, but since it would be a waste otherwise I decided to accept it.

“Thank you.”

— Ah, it looks similar to the sun orb in our national flag! (tn: the red circle in japan’s flag is the sun, because, NiHon means Sun-Origin => country of the rising sun.) Thinking I had seen this somewhere, what, so it was the national flag. I couldn’t remember because the image of a pickled plum in a bowl of white rice was too strong. No, hold on. Looking closely, aren’t these my colors (tn: i noticed before u did!), this is also similar to the cuteness of South. It’s similar as well to the white of that slightly feeble-like WHITE. ...How nostalgic. (tn: I’m guessing she’s talking about her animal friends, otherwise i have no idea wth this is about.)

“How nice, if it’s not much trouble, should you wear it now?”

Now? But it won’t do to untie the hair which is put together into two. If you do such a thing then my exploded-lion-like hair will be exposed. It’s too embarrassing!

“But my hair is damaged...”

“If it’s just that then I’ll comb it for you since I have a comb.”

I was screaming in my heart, I apologize to the town girl whose appearance I’m borrowing but this hair of mine doesn’t surrender to any comb!’ but when Ariade forcibly started combing through the hair tied in two, I was surprised that the hair that was so stiff was left flowing freely like swaying in the breeze.

“This comb holds a little magical power. I wonder if it’s what is called a ‘magic tool’. My mother told me so once.”

So such useful things exist. When she finished combing, she placed the hair ornament from before in my hair, above the right ear, at my temple’s level.

“...does it look good?”

“It does.”

It may be flattery but it makes me happy, Lance.

There is also a feeling of embarrassment because I was never careful to be girly until now, but there is also a slightly fresh and happy feeling. But thinking that it's bad that in the end only I get one, I also bought a piece for Chiffon and Madeleine. I was going to buy them myself, however Lance paid in my place. Lance's stocks are having a sudden rise within my heart.

— But I hope I don't go BALD because of future struggles.

It sincerely causes me to worry.

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—————☆

Translator's Lair~

ufufufufufufufufufu... goooo for it Lance! come give some romance to our little dragon!! yay! i'll forgive you for having dirt under your nails!! hahahhaha.

on another thought... our captain is getting ntr'd by his own platoon member ;n;

about the rising sun thing, this is when looking from China. China is written in kanji and in chinese as 'central country'. then from this central land towards the east, in the dirextion where the sun rises there's some islands (japan)... so it's like the sun actually rises from there, and voila. also, if you haven't paid attention the sun is sort of reddish when just rising in the horizon.

I think some other oriental country has a simmilarly literal name in japanese and chinese, like 'southern country' or 'western country' or the like. is it korea? probably not, but i don't remember.

also, leaving another online japanese dictionary. this one's jp-jp. this one has the Tsume no aka (dirt of the nail) explanation, lol

<http://dictionary.goo.ne.jp/jn/148345/meaning/m0u/爪の垢/>

I didn't manage to finish this before midnight in the end... blame the sekkaku and the Dreadnought <_<α

Oyasumi~☆

Chapter 21

Continued – However love talks are included. What to do in front of a storm.

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(This idiotic dots are because there's a large space in the original, but wordpress doesn't like them and just swallows them up, unless i put all these dots...)

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We rejoined the 3 people from before after some time.

Entering a close-by place simmilar to a coffee shop, we six found a place to sit. In this world there also are places like family restaurants.

“Vito-chan looks awesomely cute!”

“Ariade choose it for me.”

“You have good taste. Will you go shopping with me next time?”

“Yeah, that's fine by me.”

It seems Chiffon's group also bought around in the shops, so a conversation about that rose up.

And me? I did not keep up with their talk because of course I don't know about fashion. Stuff like 'yellow is a fashionable color right now', or 'after all lemon slices are good for beauty', and 'eh, are lemon slices really that good?' I heard that in fact vitamin C actually never enters the skin... But I have no idea if it does penetrates the skin or not, because I've never cared for my skin.

And also: 'that fortune teller often guesses right', or 'there's a cool attendant in that shop from somewhere'. The content is the kind that could be heard from high school girls or Office Ladies' talk (tn: abbreviated OL in japanese xD). Moreover, since there they switched to talking about girls' favourite: love talks, I became even more unable to keep up anymore. Since the time I was human I have not had a boyfriend, surely I live in a boyfriend-less chronological age. What's wrong with a lonely life. (tn: not sure about wth she means about chronological age).

“Little sister, I heard there's a girl from the Third Knight Corps dating someone from the

Knight Corps, but, is it true?"

"About Irene? Well yes, It's not wrong altogether, it's a mutual affection, however... they aren't really together. It's tantalizing to watch such things."

While completely forgetting that Lance and Stefanos are here, flowers are blooming in the conversation between Chiffon and the girls.

Lance, standing from his seat in silence, forcibly tried to make Stefanos stand.

"Stefan, this is not a talk that we should listen to."

'Read the atmosphere', is what his eyes were saying.

"Okay, okay. I've told you not to glare at me like that." As expected, Stefanos stood up and apparently the both of them left to look for another seat. Confirming that with my eyes, I join the conversation.

"Madeleine, are you OK? Did he do something weird to you?"

"Are you talking about Sir Stefanos?... Well he did... As soon as he had the chance his hand would come circle my waist."

What did you say!

"It was alright, though. Because whenever that happened I would pinch the back of his hand."

Well done, Madeleine. I would have liked to watch those moments by all means.

"Chiffon, how did it go?"

"As expected, Sir Stefanos was really cool! And besides he's kind."

Hey Chiffon, that image is surely temporary. A temporary appearance in order to hunt. I want to scream in my heart, 'I won't be fooled!', but I can't. Even if the other party is him, just by looking at Chiffons face it can be seen at a glance that this is love. Not wanting to talk bad about the person she likes, well, this is a case where in the end I can't do anything other than to remain silent.

"Hey, hey, Don't Vito-chan and Ariade-chan have someone they like? Or someone that catches your attention!"

"Huh?"

"What?"

Ariade and I, who did not expect that the talk would come in our direction, answered in disordered voices. Someone that catches my attention? Is that 'to LIKE'? As in 'LOVE'?

Although if it's people I LIKE then there's a lot of people, but unfortunately it seems my Dragon self won't feel (romantic) love towards human beings. I'm sure it's probably because my appetite is winning against the feelings love. (tn: C-Captain! the ship is in danger! the whole fleet is in danger! someone tell this dragon that inter-species love is a must in fantasy worlds!!) (tn2: ehem, so 'like' and 'love' were written in katakana, using the english "pronuntiation", RAIKU and RABU. I put them in mayusc. to mark the difference. also, the 'romantic' word was input by me, to clarify a little.)

Human beings are food for me to live, but at the same they are also my friends. Even the fact that I'm maintaining such strange relationships is probably solely because I, as a dragon, have a human's memories. When talking about having feelings of guilt about eating a human, I do have some. And also, I'm not really going to eat the mouth-watering Ariade and Madeleine, since I became friends with them and I'm afraid of losing them.

Well, Captain's an exception. That person can not be helped. (tn: lol, my ship is so hopeless.)

Anyway I'm a selfish creature, I should fix my attitude.

Even so, since in the first place there has been no situation where I would experience falling in love, I don't know what should I answer in return to Chiffon's question.

"... I don't have any interest in men."

"Ehh? Is that so? Well then, how about Vito-chan?"

Being stared at by those expectant and sparkling pupils, I was left stuck from words.

"It was for a short while but you stayed in the Fourth Knight Corps dormitory by a little bit. Was there no one on your mind? Well, you know! Like Sir Lance!"

"There wasn't, probably."

I think they are cool, but it is from an objective point of view rather than as members of the opposite sex, that is. And also there is, how should I say it, the feeling of a predator wanting to devour them. In the culinary sense.

But that's it.

"Even after you received that hair ornament as a gift?"

Why are you saying that now, Ariade. Isn't that somehow a smiling face that you are making. From a little while ago I don't know what you are thinking...

"Eh!? Really!?"

"...Chiffon and you also received something."

As I handed the matching hair ornaments to the two of them, they became overtly disappointed. Why?

“So not interesting. ...Talking about that, I wonder if Vito did not get close to Sir Lutoria?”

Why did the conversation turn that way! Love talks are scary! You want to drag me down! (tn: what the heck with this sentence? xD that is just my wild guess.) I really don't know what the inside of a girl's skull is made of!

While becoming flustered, I ran away by throwing the conversation towards Madeleine's direction.

“Ma, Madeleine, what about you? Is there anyone on your mind?”

“There is. A boyfriend.”

Whaaaaaat!?

It's a shocking confession. At this even Ariade was surprised. Because so far not a single word had been said about this... So it's like that, she has a boyfriend... This feeling is kinda like when you discover that your daughter has a boyfriend.

“He's someone from the First Knight Corps, though it could be said that he tickles my maternal instincts, anyway he is somebody that you want to take care of. ...His elder brother opposes but... next time I'll be introduced!”

Madeleine's cheeks become tinted as she talks of her boyfriend. She's praising her beloved so much to make the listeners embarrassed. Oh, so you'd make that kind of face when you fall in love, —it's too cute.

Just try thinking about it. Madeleine's cute looking face's cheeks are tinted red and invaded by embarrassment*, and making upturned eyes, me, me likes her! Or even let's try to confess to her. Any man will be defeated hands down. I was also beaten hands down.

“Your brother in law really likes you a lot, sister.”

“You are going too far. Recently he even comes to disturb us when we are alone together. I'm sick of him already. I wonder if he won't get a girlfriend soon and mature already.”

Is he a sis-con? (tn: because, sister-in-law.) That feeling, I know it... That is to say, that. In the end my brother seems to be a pervert.

I want to return to being human but when I think of my pervert of a brother I would like to refrain from it.

“Oh, that's right, what do you think of that brother-in-law? His face is fairly good, and he's popular, too. However I think his personality should be fine if you have patience.”

That's why, why do you involve me! Why drag me down! (Tn: again with that phrase... just guessing~)

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Translator 's Depression:

*after 45 minutes of searching, I found why a nikanda kao (wrinkled face) as vito says about maddy is supposed to be cute:

(///'.:///)

これではにかんだ顔表現したことある (with this I've represented a 'wrinkled face'). it's a face 'wrinkled' with lines of embarrassment. seriously, what the hell! xD thank you nanashi-san (Japanese for no-name) from somewhere-in-japan who made that representation, it's the only one I found. to begin with, the verb nikamu is a goddarned local dialect from some random area, to say 'to become shiwashiwa'... then shiwashiwa, is wrinkled xD as if submerged in water for a long time. and I was like... wut? how did she bcome like dat like wth went wrong n where's deh cuteness in thaaaaaaarghh.

Σ(`^`)/~ ㄥ ㄥ ㄥ ㄥ

and then such a random word just had to become popular and get a random urban meaning. so nanashi-san, u my hero. arigatou gozaimashita.

i went and wrote it as cheeks invaded by embarrassment, because, really, if I wrote:

/her face was full of embarrassment lines/

I would still go ahead and imagine wrinkles (expression lines).

also, I'm gonna try and standarize the way honorifics are translated.

Vito usually refers to the knights as -San, but that doesn't fit the way she thinks of them, while chiffon refers to them as -sama, which is way too formal. not to mention a pain to translate, but awkward to leave as is. so... unless is Vito's head, all knights shall be referred to as Sir. pretty simple, huh? xD

about the -chans, those are horrible too. I avoid them when I can xD but I'm opting for leaving them there if I can't replace them with some form of endearment or... ignore them xD in Spanish we do have a way to translate that... (by adding -Ito/ita to the end of a name.) I guess adding a -y is the way to translating in English? Madeleine →maddy, Chiffon →.... Vito →vitty? Ariade... okno. not doing that.

...uhm, yes, part 2 shall come. i need my beauty sleep. not that it works, but it keeps the brain going. let's hope such a word doesn't pop up again, especially cause there's a ponytail coming... ohohohohohoho.

Chapter 21 – part 2

After leaving the shop we said ‘Shall we return to the castle now?’, but as Ariade has a place she wants to go to no matter what, she and the still energetic Chiffon, as well as Stefanos, ended up leaving. “We’ll return right away,” they said, but a girl’s shopping is long. However it’ll be good if we return to the castle before it gets dark.

We are waiting in vain at a nearby park together with Lance because I got tired of the crowd. I’m feeling weak since inevitably my eyes end up going all around when I’m in a place with a lot of people.

“It’s unusual for you two to have a vacation leave at the same time, now that I think about it.”

“Today everyone at the Fourth Knight Corps had a holiday.”

Oh, I see, so it was like that.

I remembered having encountered something like the Knights’ vacation days several times while I was working in the dorms. I couldn’t clean because the Knights would stay in the dorm all the way from morning till night, and I recall that, in the end, I would relax while even drinking tea with the Vice-Captain. I guess those are the days chosen by some for planning to hit on girls in the castle town.

“The Captain is also on vacation today. He’s certainly come down to town with the Vice - Captain to take care of some business . Do you want to go meet them?”

“Is that so? But... I’m good. Because I may become a bother you.”

What business could they be taking care of. Shopping, or something like that? I haven’t gone to the dorms since then. My room is distant by a range, so it is accurate to say that there is no time for me to go. It’s frustrating that I’m unable to eat Nath’s rice. Speaking of that I wonder if the Vice-Captain’s daughter is okay. We haven’t met since then but don’t tell me she has collapsed. I’m worried. Let’s ask the Vice-Captain the next time I see him.

“Speaking about the devil. Miss Vito, please look forward.”

Looking in front as prompted to by Lance, there is a person who is sitting at the edge of a fountain decorated with a stunning stone statue of a Venus-de-Milo-like naked woman.

Who would it be?

“It’s the captain.”

It’s a liiiee, you’re kidding me saying such a lie. There’s no way he’ll appear with such a timing, and he is not Stefanos. But there’s that bright green hair, and my delicacies-sensor is

reacting. While saying 'No way', and trying to strain my eyes, it does seem to be the Captain without a place for doubt. I ended up doubting it because he's not wearing the usual white uniform, and he also has a different hairstyle.

"It looks like he's apparently waiting for the Vice-Captain."

"You can tell?"

"This park is well used as a meeting place."

Like Hachiko or something like that. (tn: reference to the uber famous dog statue in front of shibuya station. i think it was shibuya. you can watch hachiko's old japanese movie if u wanna cry.) That reminds me, I guess because there is no convenient things like mobile phones in this world, a park with such a prominent fountain will inevitably become a waiting place.

It's fine if it's a fake so please someone make me a pseudo-mobile phone. I wonder if maybe Ariade and the girls would make it if I tell them. But would it be impossible because they are still eggs (of a magician?), so I'll try to look forward to it a little more ahead in the future. Yup.

"How about you go and meet him? You haven't met recently, right?"

Well it's so but, I do not think that 'I would really like to meet him'. There is some unease in my heart since leaving the dormitory, but I don't worry too much about it since I understand it as something normal. (tn: unsure about the meaning of 'shaberu' in this context~) Rather, I'm feeling fearful by thinking 'What if I'm discovered?' every time we meet. His senses are sharp, so if I let slide even something small from my mouth it'll become a serious matter. But when being told that by Lance I do get the feeling of wanting to meet him.

"Well then, just for a little bit, I will come back soon."

Lance saw me off with a smile and saying 'Take care.'

As I'll be leaving him here alone I'll try to come back soon.

When going closer, as expected, it was the Captain.

"Captain, what a coincidence."

And it is a ponytail today. What's with this, it's too cute.

While braiding was troublesome, when sporting a ponytail he looks as nothing but a woman. It's to the point where barely by him not having breasts and because of the male voice, you can tell otherwise. I saw a good thing today. Yeah, let's burn the memory firmly in my eyes.

When the Captain gazes at my attire, he blushes and grabs his hair. (tn: again, the word used

is nikanda. it is a face blushing like so: (///●.●///). now add a ponytail.)

“Matching outfits?”

I- I’m telling you I didn’t chose these clothes with that in mind! P-please do not misunderstand! Or, had I said so I’d have been called a tsundere so I obediently nodded and said.

“It looks like that.”

Not cute, aren’t I. I’m too bland.

Saying, ‘Excuse me, I’ll sit by your side’ I sit on the edge of the fountain next to the Captain. Since it’s close to the water, it’s cool.

“Shopping?”

“That is correct. How about Captain?”

“It’s something like preparations for the upcoming mission, I think. Because it will take many days.”

Preparation for the journey, is it. If they go on the Fire Drakes they could fly, but I heard that they’ll go on foot. It seems to take about three to four days. But it’s one week for the round-trip. It means to walk quite a distance and it would need appropriate preparations. I certainly believe they didn’t said that Lance is not going, but that person is dependable so he’s surely making suitable preparations, isn’t he.

“Talking about that, it is to welcome in the messenger of Tiruzoto Country. I heard from Vice-Captain ... that you, have been singled out.”

“It looks like that.”

It’s my fault. Because I behaved in such a manner, I’m causing him troubles. He wouldn’t have been singled out had I not done that.

Why, I wonder, human beings are at the mercy of rumors. To believe in iffy things that are not even clear without knowing wether they are truth, is an irresistible wonder. Well I am also being sent left and right by the rumors. But when asked if they really believe in it, they’ll say they will never believe it in earnest. I do not want to believe things other than what I see with my own eyes.

“But the rumors are...”

“Yeah, and they are just rumors. Even so, I think they are a good thing.”

I don’t get what’s good about it.

“As long as between me and that dragon there is a small connection, even if that conection

is only a rumor, I don't care."

"...Are you not thinking about contracting it?"

"Why?"

As if to say 'that's too wondrous' he tilts his head to the side in confusion.

"Because, you'll be able to become this country's hero, right? Isn't that a great honor?"

I often hear many things. If I had a contract, if I was able to form a contract, how great would that be, and the like. The heroic saga of the one who can save the country is transmitted on to the future and your name is recorded in history. Everyone longs for that. There is no way someone won't long for it.

"Honor, huh. It may certainly be a honorable thing."

'But', he continued.

"I wonder if it's not honor or the like what maintains that rumor, but the people's desire, their sincere hope, for the country to win the war."

If the dragon of legend, which has led to victory in war until now was in their favor, everyone will be able to see hope, convinced of victory. No matter who the contractor is. t would have. There's even people who are thinking of honor and so. But what I'm really sincerely hoping for, is for our country to win in order to live in peace. It's truly just that, so, should I say it.

"...Will you, really go?"

I wonder if there is any sense in going.

"I'll go."

"Even if, it may be a trap?"

"I believe in LeBlanche. ...However, if something we're to happen, please take care of the Fire Drakes in the Dragon building. Because they seem to like Vito."

As usual I don't know what he is thinking because of his hidden pupils. I don't know what he is thinking as he says those words.

"You are just leaving the aftermath to someone else."

"You could say that, right."

Don't laugh.

Thinking about it in earnest, in the Fire Drakes' Building there are more than a 100 of them.

It's sort of unreasonable to take care of them all. Also I think that that's not Captain's intention, but throwing the burden to someone else while speaking in a refreshing manner, I don't know whether he's joking or being serious. Well, isn't it fine whichever he meant.

"There's even a chance that you won't be able to come back?"

"I won't die. Because there still remain things that I want to do. But we don't know what will happen, do we?"

"... I hate to say so."

He's being unclear. I feel like I'm being kind of cheated vaguely.

My head seems like it will explode by all the things I don't know and can't understand.

"Aren't you thinking too lightly of your own life?"

"No, there is no such thing."

"Then how can you consider this with such ease? Even at the time of the subjugation expedition, if the Earth Dragon did not come to help you may have died. Not only that, you may have been eaten and by that flesh-eating dragon and died. Even war, I heard that I soon a big war might happen...!"

I ended up raising my voice, talking fast as if I was flustered. I also thought it was strange myself.

The Captain says in a tone of voice harder than usual.

"...Vito, I'm a Knight. To protect the country, we exist. We can not change our mission because of the will of an individual who says 'I don't want to die' or the like. Someone must go, and that someone is us. And because of that, we can not run away."

I did not look at his face, and hung my head down as I clenched my fists tightly.

"A lot of people have died until now. Even my Fire Drakes have become sacrifices. I'd be lying if I said I'm not afraid. But if after all this time I run away now for such a reason, it will seem as if I'm denying everything until now, and I would hate that."

"I don't understand... I can't understand that."

I did not want to understand.

I am an idiot. A big idiotic thing. For the sake of what do Knights exist? Are they not obviously existences that protect the country? That's their job. Even the other Knights, are surely so. There 's no exception, it's just that my individual will is shameless.

Yet I'm only causing trouble by behaving like a child throwing a tantrum, unable to understand reason.

When I still had my head down, a gentle voice falls on me.

“...Sorry.”

“Why, are you apologizing?”

But it's me the one who should apologize.

However the Captain did nothing wrong, won't he have an outburst of rage at me? I'm the worst. How come I've become so emotional.

“Vito.”

His slender hand touches my maroon bangs as I still had my head down.

I, for the first time, shook off his hand.

“... I'm sorry. I spoke too much. Chiffon and the rest are waiting for me, so please excuse me.”

My name was called from behind, but I turned my heels and left the place in a fast pace, as if I was running away.

Surely, my face right now looks awful.

Distorted to the point of not being fit of letting others see it.

Knowing that there's the possibility he might die, that he might not return, how come he can remain so collected.

If I were you I'd run away. But it is because I am an outsider. To this country, even to the continent, also to this world.

But Captain's different. Born in this country, he grew up with this country.

I'm the one who's different. I know it, I do know it.

...I know. The truth is that I know it.

About Captain's thoughts, there's no way I'll be able to intervene with them. There is no way I'll be able to interject.

Hasn't he been living like that so far. Experiencing, many times, critical moments where he could have died. Death too, how many times has he seen it. That's why I think this time I ultimately decided by myself. But I did not want to admit it.

Why. How come. I don't understand my own feelings.

I'm supposed to be satisfied by just the Captain staying alive.

Because I want to eat him, it's only that.

That's why I don't want him to die, and I don't want him to go to a dangerous place. The matters with this messenger, make me feel uneasy somehow... I truly don't want him to go.

But there's no way I can say that. I don't have the qualifications to say so.

Because for me, the plans that I have for killing the Captain, haven't changed at all.

☆

Translator's lair:

...FINISHHEEEED.

ughh this chapter. that was intense, somehow! and...

...ponytails make people feel like talking. a lot, lol.

also, captain, ur cuteness shall be illegal from now on. I'll Sue you. (///•.•///) <- THAT's totally different if it's the captain rather than Madeleine... maybe if he wasn't so cute he'd be less delicious, and our dragon wouldn't want to eat him THAT badly. and the ship... was it just me or there where some ship flags in there? somewhere???????

and the reason for the matching green skirt was totally seen through, huh? I wasn't expecting that xD although it was by elimination...

I wanted to cut this last part in half, but... where? xD this meeting was so... uhm, interesting? there was nowhere to stop at!

also, if my grammar is sometimes a little off... that's cause in Spanish grammar is a little freer, and there's no fixed order for most elements in a sentence (as long as the meaning is the same you can flip things here and there), so... yeah. my mind's at fault. shoot it if you wish to. with do-cannons...

see u next time~

Chapter 22 Part 1

To infuriate the messenger from the neighboring country. Holy Beast.

The reception of the messenger from Tiruzoto was to happen in a few days according to the Vice-Captain.

It seems they'll go north starting from Alvina City until they reach Tiruzoto's highways to meet him. On top of it, it will take several days on foot because they will not use the Dragons.

The ones who are going to pick him up are the Captain of the First Knight Corps and the Captain of the Fourth Knight Corps, their respective Vice-Captains, and the men they selected themselves, in addition to being accompanied by someone who surprised me to say the least, the prince. (T/N: all these captain-vice-captain references are making me recall the legend of the sun knight real bad... xD) I think that he ought not to go to such lengths because it's dangerous, but the prince seems to want to show that there is no war intention by exposing his body deliberately to risk.

I don't know how far-spread is this intel, but this was let known to only a limited number of people and if something happened it would be the end.

I was somehow having a bad feeling after listening to this from Nassau who overheard it. By the way, I heard this when I came to eat Nassau's rice for the first time in a long time. Or perhaps this story was already leaked to Nassau. Is it all right? And I get the feeling that the Prince is a little too foolishly honest. Isn't it fine if he hadn't gone himself? It's too dangerous.

I have heard that Tiruzoto Country has used cowardly moves many times in the past, could it be that the matter with this messenger was also a trap? What if they suddenly get attacked by the one said to be the messenger?

Everyone, and moreover the Captain might get killed. Furthermore, not even the Fire Drakes are with them as is usual for them during combat. It is likely that it would be total annihilation.

The first time, my head became filled by the matter with Lord Cleric. Because nothing happened since then, I'm sure he probably didn't speak of it to the Prince. I feel relieved, but also insecure because of the feeling of my weakness being taken a hold of.

On the second time, I became worried about the Captain and his group, but passed it off like an adult as if it was some needless anxiety. Speaking of which, somehow that time I went home unilaterally angry that time, and as I wasn't feeling good about it for some reason or another we haven't talked again... Thinking of it now, I may have, somehow, done something really rude, but even if I want to apologize for it, by no means I've had the chance to. How frustrating.

This third time my uneasiness has become severe, I can no longer stay still, so I pretended to be sick once more and immediately flew off.
I'm getting an unpleasant premonition.

It was like that with the matter of the Subjugation Corps, my presentment at this kind of situations tends to be on the mark.

"Are you really okay?"

I feel terribly sorry to the two people who are worrying about my fake illness.

"I'll be alright, I'll get better by sleeping, rather than that, if you don't hurry won't you be late for roll call?"

"...Then please rest properly. Well, let's go, Chiffon."

"Ye- yeah. Take care! Vito-chan."

With this I should be safe until the evening.

Chiffon and the girls might come back at noon break time, but I plan on deceiving them by saying I went to the toilet or something.

As a dragon I shall arrive in less than a few hours.

I was flying while feeling like a déjà vu, but still landed on a highway in the intended location.

It's just that I simply want to know. If it's not a trap, it'll be fine to return at the very first opportunity to do so, but if it was a trap of course I'll help... by jumping in?

...How should I do it, I don't know. The situation of the subjugation was something sudden, and in my head there was nothing more than the Captain. So I was able to go in and help.

But this time there might be a battle between countries if you take one step wrongly. And it might turn into a more serious situation once I intervene. I wonder if that may be considered a good thing if it's caused by me ...Probably, such a thing is hopeless. Such a thing is not going to be forgiven. I do not know if someone would but, someone who will forgive the beginning of a strife between fellow countries because of the ideas of a single living being, doesn't exist.

But I could not overlook it.

I took a human form and was overlooking the vicinity, but other than the highway there's nothing other than a forest, and it seems nobody is coming. As I was searching around while thinking 'Is there a place to hide here in the woods', I noticed that there are people inside the forest.

Looking at the figures hiding in the trees, there are three people, and the one in the center had been lying on top of some white animal.

— I wonder what they are doing. But it seems that they have an animal with them.

"Geez, ain't this one useless already? They really are disposable."

He's kicking the animal that seemed about to stand. The animal may be injured and bleeding, because its white body was stained red.

— Could this be, animal abuse? No way, in a place like this?

"Even though it's a precious Holy Beast." (T/N: is this a pet flag?!?!)

"Hey, it's a waste of time to stay in the surroundings. They'll arrive in a little more."

"I know that."

The three people left for somewhere and left the animal behind. When I approached in a hurry, I gasped.

It's still a child. Also, it's a foal.

Although small wings which I thought were unusual were growing from its back, it might not be uncommon in this world.

More than that, serious injuries are seen here and there in its fur, which is pure white as if shining, staining it red. It was calling its mother in a thin cry which seemed sorrowful.

Such a terrible human, capable of doing such a thing!

I rip my apron to stop the bleeding, pressing down on the wounds.

The foal's eyelids opened, and the golden eyes dimmed in tears looked up at me.

[Mom...?"] (T/N: I almost forgot she can talk to animals...)

"I'm sorry, I'm not your mom... does it hurt?"

"It,... Huuurts."

I gently embraced the tattered pony that kept crying, and searched around, thinking of a

place that would give it medical care.

It's quite weak and its body temperature is lowering, so it will die as it is.

Speaking of that, when I was flying here I get the feeling I saw some house-like building nearby. It was a small house, but while praying that someone does live there, I started running.

Humans impassively pull off terrible things. I know not all humans are like that, but animals don't. (T/N: unsure about this~)

However, I didn't forget about them. The rage boiling in my guts again and again is enough to kill the gods.

But now I have to help this child! There's no time to bother with that kind of guys...!

After running for some time while holding the foal, I feel relief when the house becomes visible.

—That's great! My eyes didn't fail me!! (T/N: she says she didn't look wrong... but that sounds odd in English or is it just me?)

When I knocked on the door in a hurry, a little girl came out. It was a lovely girl dressed in dark robes.

"That, I'm sorry for the suddenness. I wish to treat this child."

I appealed desperately to her while out of breath, while the girl opened wide her amethyst eyes to see the animal in my arms.

"Isn't this a Unicorn's child? How come... Ah, no, rather than that, enter quickly, let's treat it."

_____ ☆

Translator's Lair:

Japanese and their idea that unicorns and Pegasus are the same... did they never sing the song Pegasus Fantasy? Where is a horn mentioned in there?!

...I did this on my laptop. Th-this speed!! Ok, maybe I'll seriously consider dropping the whole translating-on-my-mobile thing, and move on to pc-translating. it takes waaaay too long. On another note, this chapter spans 8 & 1/2 word pages, yay~ here you have the first 3 pages! :D it will come in three parts because, heck. It's nine pages. Sadly, most chapters will be like this from now on, I went and saved up to

chapter forty-something, lol. I hope to be able to reach there. Also, huzza for plot advancement!! Will we get to see dragon awesomeness this chapter? Will the pony end up becoming a pet character?!? Will we get to see/read spilt guts?!?! And yeah, my beauty sleep. It does wonders to eliminate the bags under the eyes, so I look prettier after actually sleeping. ...I do believe so... (u_u)

Chapter 22 part 2

While thinking that this girl's manner of speech is very adult-like, I entered the house and laid the foal on top of the table she indicated to me.

She grumbled in a low voice with her brows creased as she leaned over it as if to check on its condition.

"This is terrible; there are marks of it being beaten many times. Will you bring me a clean towel from there?"

When I passed several towels to the girl from the shelf, she was pouring a drop of liquid from a small bottle she got at some point into the wounds.

As the glittering drop touched the wounds, they were healed in the time it took to say "Ah!"

Just now, what was that?

Without even giving me time to be surprised, since she said 'water,' I went and scooped water from the kitchen-like place. This room is mysterious, but the kitchen was also strange. There a lot of pots from small ones to larger ones, and in a shelf tall as a wall, there are many transparent bottles tightly lined up, their content being something I cannot guess. Liquids, solids, also colorful contents, but there weren't any things similar to being immersed in the formalin of a science room, as one would have expected, so they didn't give off a bad vibe. Nonetheless the room from earlier is also strange. It's by large not a place where a young girl would live. On the walls, stuffs like skulls are hanging from kitchen knives as if to be shown off. It's entirely like a room used to perform black magic.

Tilting my head at such a house I return to the room where water is scooped. Apparently the previous acts have ended some time ago and the foal has been wrapped in a clean towel.

"The wounds have been closed. However since the blood loss was severe it will be useless if it doesn't get some rest."

She wets the towel in the water I brought, and wipes the blood away.

I also confirm that the foal's condition has stabilized as I help her, and become with a sigh. But I wonder what was that liquid from earlier. It healed the wounds in but a moment.

"Uhm, that from just now,"

"It was magic. It's not that unusual in this era, right?"

"...No, it was pretty unusual."

(T/N: the word used for plenty/enough, etc, is written十分, 'ten minutes' xD i guess because

ten minutes are enough for many things? xD)

In the first place I haven't seen much recovery magic. Lord Cleric also used it, but it was only a moment and I almost didn't feel anything. And what's more, I heard that since recovery magic is high class magic, the humans that can use it are only a handful in the world.

This girl who used it, just who on earth is she?

"Oh, that so? ...By the way, how did this child get this hurt?"

As I tell her what I saw a little while earlier, the girl nods in understanding.

"I see. I'm sure those fellows are from Tiruzoto. Saying that from the old days the Unicorn is the Holy Beast of their country, they force them to submit. They take them as prisoners as done with this child. Although originally they should only be touched by pure maidens, a lot of people want to make them into things to show off by touching them... so pitiful."

'It would be great if there was a way to help them', she muttered.

To think such a situation would exist. It's no wonder then the terrible way those people treated this child.

Then I wonder if the mother of this child is nearby, or is still together with that people. If those people are the messengers, then they'll surely meet with the Prince's group.

Is this, a trap? I wonder just what do they want to do by even bringing their country's Holy Beast over here?

"Does a Unicorn have something like a great power?"

"A great power, huh. Well, it is something to be called great. For a little while it can stop the opponent's time, and perform an attack similar to light magic."

Isn't that quite dangerous. If the Prince's time is stopped and then he is attacked, and ended up dying, the country will fall to chaos. Is that what they are aiming for by bringing an Unicorn? Holy Beasts are creatures that countries abiding for peace won't raise their hand against.

I'm sort of feeling a hateful premonition.

"More than that, I wonder if you are human. There's something a little off about you."

"Huh?"

"Hehe, I can tell because I'm a witch. Since I've been holed up for several centuries already my ignorance of the ways of the world is my charm. After 500 years passed I stopped counting the days because it was such a bother." (T/N: she says she has been hikikomori'ing xD (引きこもってる))

I feel that that she has come out to me with something ridiculous. Witch? Hikikomori? Over 500 years old? Aah my head has started to go around and around because of thinking too much. Could it be that she's the same as that person? Just by remembering so my hair stands on end.

"I'm, you see, what was it again... Timotea, yes, call me Timotea. (T/N: Teemohteh-ah, as in Spanish.), Without honorifics, I hate those. You are?"

"I'm Vito. I'm working as a servant in Alvina Country."

Is it fine not to tell her my last name? It seems likely that there's no meaning in telling it to this person. Even so somehow I ended up talking politely. Is this is also a witch's POWER?

"So? Your true identity is?"

— Ugh. Somehow I can't lie.

"... I am a Dragon."

"Oh my, a Dragon! Then you may be an Earth Dragon! I wonder how many hundreds of years has it been, but it has been a long time!"

Her pupils are shining brilliantly. She is a grown-up already, but her happily smiling face is the expression of a young girl.

"How can you know I am an Earth Dragon?"

"Because amongst all Dragons, only Earth Dragons can change forms. Were you not aware of it?"

"Should I say I'm not? it's a little complicated."

Is it fine to tell her this or not? But Lady Timo... But Timo has something that makes me say everything.

I don't know if it's because she is a witch, but for the first time since I came to this world, I told everything to someone else.

Starting from the Vizan'nu mountain, that I came down the mountain because I became fed up of the subjugations done by the nearby human population, that I eat human beings, about the human beings that I met, everything.

I'm surprised about having told such things to a young girl who doesn't look like she has lived more than a decade. Even though I'd usually be wary of her or dodge the talk.

Maybe, I am tired of thinking too much about various matters. Even so, I'm actually naïve inside, in a bad meaning.

Timo was me listening silently to my story. I wonder because ... while nodding occasionally, that's why, how, I ended up saying everything.

“Ooh. A human’s memories.”

Timo thought about it a little and then she showed her point of view; ‘I don’t understand’. She says.

“It’s very interesting but unfortunately I don’t understand it. But if the world is not only one it is not a strange thing for this to happen, right?”

“Yes, I wonder why?”

It’s the first time I hear that the world is not only one. I wonder if there are still a lot of other worlds? I’ve forgotten with whom I discussed this with, but we’d talk about parallel worlds, or the world line, or so.

“That’s right. And why you have become this way, and the reason and origin of it, are things nobody knows. It seems you’ve ended up like that because of chance. If so, it’s fine to find an answer for yourself. Anything’s good. If you can turn ‘chance’ into ‘inevitability’, you’ll become a living being with peace of mind that can find their own deserved reason d’être. (T/N: not sure.) I am also like that. I am here doing research because I have something I want to achieve.”

In a place like this where people won’t approach, you are researching?

“The world is such a thing. Aren’t you a little worried because you were told that you have to help this country as an Earth Dragon?”

“...I do not know. In the first place I almost have no awareness of being an Earth Dragon.”

“You don’t want to be aware of it, right? I understand that feeling. Saving the country is too heavy of a burden. It’s not like you’re a hero.”

“... What in the world, do you think I should do?”

“You’re asking me about it?”

“Oh, I’m sorry. That’s right. We are supposed to think about our problems on our own.”

“You, really, are very serious.”

Laughing with a ‘huhu’, she had an amused look on her.

“You end up brooding about it because you’re too serious. You end up carrying the responsibility for every little thing that has a connection to you. But you know, it’s fine if you don’t think too deeply about things. The species known as the Earth Dragon has certainly been drawn to Alvina whenever there is a looming crisis. But, even if it was so previously, nobody knows what will happen from now on, right? Not getting caught by preconceptions, it’ll be good to do just what you want to do. Because there’s nothing tying you down.”

“But, didn’t the previous Earth Dragons help the country while under a contract?”

“That’s why don’t get fooled by that. Those children weren’t doing a mission for someone else, they formed a contract and protected the country by their own will.”

Now that she says it I feel like Lord Cleric said something similar as well.

“No one can impose such mission upon you. That mission, is something meaningful by being something that decided by one’s own will. I think so. You as well, aren’t you thinking that somewhere inside. That’s why it’s fine to do what you want to do without thinking too much. It’ll be fine to act however you want to act. Ans please make that into your reason for existing. Even if it results in you hurting others.”

Timo directed a calming smile towards me.

“Please obediently accept my words. You can still turn back if you fail because you’re young.”

Speaking of which, isn’t Timo over 500 years old, thinking about it, it’s funny. She looks like a young girl on the outside, but the content is that of a quite old grandma. To receive a life ADVICE from someone like her. It was strange, but it made me a little happy.

— Is that so, it’s fine not to thinking too deeply? Nothing will happen even if I think about it. The reality before my eyes won’t change. What changes is just my own feelings. Becoming depressed, or rejoicing, it’s just that. If thinking about it won’t give you an answer, then it’s fine not to think about it. It’ll be fine to do what I want to do. I can regret it afterwards. It’s likely that I might had become crushed by my own thoughts of fearing failure, and fearing disappointing others.

I had become sensitive to each and every issue, because of believing that I had to think deeply about it since I couldn’t understand everything.

Even if I think of ‘For what reason did I became a dragon with human memories’, I won’t find an answer. Because the answer is not within my brain.

Then it’s fine to just stop thinking.

Even if I am the legendary Earth Dragon. No matter if I’m being revered in Alvina as the presence that protects the country, it is something they arbitrarily decided and has nothing to do with me. Since I have some attachment to the country there is also a sense of guilt as a human, and I also think that a lot of people might die by my decision, but ultimately the one that chooses is me, not anyone else.

I want to live walking the road where I have no regrets, even though I may be insulted, or even stoned while being insulted.

The living are always selfish. I believe that it’s instinct for living beings to try to act for themselves in the first place. So I, by my own will, shall live a selfish DRAGON LIFE.

— So, I decided.

Maybe it was because I was pondering, but I noticed that I tightly held onto my skirt on top of my knees and had my eyelids closed.

Opening the eyelids, in front of my eyes is Timo. Swinging her hair that reaches her shoulders and is the same color as her amethyst eyes, she was smiling.

I get a warm feeling just by looking at that smile.

“Thank you. I have organized my feelings.”

“You don’t need to apologize. I’ll say plenty if my words can be of any help to you.”

And she’s a really kind person.

I noticed when Timo said it, that I might have wanted to receive an opportunity to someone, so I smile wryly.

But it won’t do to stay here forever. I stayed too long. And we spoke a lot.

It could even be that the Prince’s party has already met with Tiruzoto.

I totally forgot the reason I came flying here at full speed. Dangerous dangerous.

I was relieved to hear a slight sleeping breath as I stared at the child Unicorn.
I’ll be at ease if this child is entrusted to Timo.

“... I, I have a place I need to go to.”

“So it seems. I can take custody of this child. Do me the favor to tell its mother to come pick it up.”

“It has been a pleasure to meet you.”

“Yes and, come here if you are lost again. I’ll become your strength.”

Making an adult-like face unsuitable to a girl Timo saw me off.

Timo is a really mysterious person. Well that’s because she’s a witch.

She answered all of the things that had been making me suffer until now. She didn’t give me the answers I wanted, but showed me the way that leads to those answers.

I’m feeling refreshed to the point of wondering just why was I suffering because of those things.

However I wonder, why are they so irritating.

The ones that harmed the Unicorn child, those people.

Chapter 23

T/N: The author has officially hybridized Unicorns and Pegasus. The species here is basically a winged unicorn.

Also, if it wasn't clear, brackets [_] will be used in animal speech as opposed to the “ _ ” that are used for human speech. (because in Japanese they use 『ありがとう』that type of brackets for animals and this type for humans 「だが・・・！！」)

Anyway, I'll be needing thug speech lessons, it seems. They didn't teach me that at school. I'm sowwy :'(

Chapter 23

To stand up, to ascertain and to divide the pros and cons.

I can't forgive them.

I can't forgive those people.

Those who wounded the still young baby Unicorn.

And those who have the intention to deceive others.

My feet are directing me to the highway from earlier. (T/N: she's going there as a human.)

When I arrived at the highway, they were there. 'They' are, of course, the Prince of Alvina's party and the messengers from Tiruzoto country. The messengers' group is definitely the ones who treated the Unicorn with cruel eyes. Obviously they have many people, more than the lined up ten-odd people from Alvina country; they have about thirty people or more. And an adult Unicorn stood there next to them.

How sublime it is! With angel-like wings, a horse that crosses the heavens. But from my eyes it feels a little blurry when looking at it. I wonder if it's because, as Timo said, Unicorns are things that should not be touched.

The Unicorn's expression was tinged with melancholy, and was somehow in a languid state. Is she worrying about her child?

It seems I was too slow to arrive by a step. The Prince's side has already been attacked by the Unicorn on orders from Tiruzoto's messenger, everyone is laying on the ground. I don't know what the light attack is like but there're people with burn holes on their clothes. The messenger's people are also wielding their weapons in hand and may pounce on them on any second.

“Why...”

The Prince's face was distorting, seemingly in despair.

"I didn't think the prince of a country would come out so obediently for such a thing. Was he raised to be so naïve that he won't doubt people? Hah, how laughable!!"

The man who looked like the leader approached the crouching Prince, pulled out his sword and swung it downwards.

"LeBlanche...!"

"Lutoria!?" (T/N: omgnooo)

In a flash, the Captain protected the Prince with his body and received a slash to the right shoulder, falling to his knees.

— Wait, you over there!! Watcha doin' to the Captain!!

"Damn, stop time properly, you creature!" (T/N: he says 'omae'... that can't be TL'd so I made into 'creature'.)

This time he hit the adult Unicorn. On top of it, he hit it quite strongly as it was left staggering.

"Hey quit it. Won't His Majesty get angry if it gets a large wound? In the best of cases..."

"Shuddup I know! We will be given a reward just by bringing these guys' heads, right? It's a surprisingly easy-peasy mission, huh."

It's not enough with the child, to think they even use violence against the adult Unicorn. So cruel.

I wonder if these people truly worship the unicorn as the Holy Beast of their country. As Timo said, it is just being used, but even so I cannot stay still and do nothing.

... I can't watch as the Unicorn, as well as everyone, get killed. And I want to strike this anger into something. I'm just growing angry in a strange calmness. It might actually be good to let my feelings explode and turn violent here. But if I do so I may involve the Prince's party in the damage.

I just do the things I want to do. Yes, I'll do what I want to.

I'm just that kind of selfish, Dragon.

For example, even I lose the place I belong to, even if I can't stay in the castle anymore, even my friends, if I have to sacrifice everything, I have to step forward now.

No, I want to step forward. That's what I meant. For everyone, there is a point which they will not wish to yield. There's not even the need to compare the two options.

Because at this rate, everyone will die. The Prince, as well as the Vice-Captain, the group from the First Knight Corps, and Lance, Stefanos, and the Knights who I recognize from the dormitory too — Also, the Captain.

I don't want that. I absolutely don't want that.

'It's because I want to eat them', these feelings are not that simple. I had plenty of opportunities and chances to eat them, but didn't because I didn't want to lose my job, and because I made the country's issues into an excuse. I was also running away, however I could have eaten them at anytime I felt like it. And I could also have fled the country and go somewhere else afterwards.

The reason I didn't do it, it's just, — because I did not want to lose them.

I have the habit of eating other humans, but will I not eat them, and, did my view of them change?

What's wrong with my view having changed? That's what's good about humans.

I'm living by killing them and eating them, but for me humans are not just food. It's contradictory, but for me they are important and irreplaceable existences.

I stepped forward.

Bypassing several collapsed Knights, as if bouncing through; I also pass by the Vice-Captain's side.

"Why... is Miss Vito is here!?"

The moment I entered the Vice captain's sight.

Why is the me who is supposed to be at the castle here? The answer is simple. Because I flew over.

But nobody knows I'm a Dragon and it's cumbersome to explain. Various gazes fall on me from behind, but I ignore them unapologetically.

At the moment my attention is fully in the things in front of my eyes.

When I walk up to in front of the Captain's eyes, who was being supported by the Prince, I crouch so as to match his line of sight.

"You, why are you here..."

The Prince and the Captain as well were surprised by me being here.

Well I'm also surprised, since the Captain is a heroine character to the end. What does he feel at being protected by a girl? ...But it's fine. Because including that, all of it, I like it. (T/N: qwjhbdaqwkjwebkjhbkqkwjd!!!! (///>w

“Vito ...?”

My gaze is glued to his blood dripping shoulder, and I naturally extend my hand as if I’m being tempted. Staining my index and middle fingers with red blood, I brought them to my mouth, licking them.

Delicious. But at this moment I won’t think of indulging in eating him even if he’s delicious. Raising my hand again I scoop up his long bangs. My eyes meet widely open surprised black eyes. It’s a very pleasant sight.

Although the Captain opened his mouth as if he really wanted to say something, I intercepted him before he could say anything.

“I, am not letting you die — definitely.”

No matter how many times he faces danger, I absolutely won’t let him die. I don’t want to let him die.

I rose up slowly before turning around.

Walking two, three steps forward, as I face the messenger from Tiruzoto and his group, they were only frowning a little at me who came out so suddenly. I wonder if they think that I’m just a little girl.

But for the time being they are not saying anything in wariness. Ignoring them, I directed my gaze towards the Unicorn.

“Hey, whose will are you following?”

I ask the Unicorn in front of my eyes. The Unicorn was surprised that I suddenly spoke to it, however it neighed in a low voice.

[Because it is Our mission.] (T/N: Unicorn refers to itself in a majestic way.)

“I’m not asking that. I want to hear what your own will is. Your mission, is it? Your responsibility, is it? Such things were selfishly decided by someone in the past, and are selfishly forced upon you, aren’t they. I won’t become your miracle (T/N: wild guess – 私は貴方が不思議でならないよ). You have wings that can fly like I do, yet you are entangled from yourself in invisible chains. You have a sharp horn to fight back with, but you don’t wield it and simply continue to follow after the humans. ”

[...Thou, ought not to know a thing about Our situation? For which reason can thou say such a thing.] (T/N: watch me fail at ancient speech.)

“I truly don’t know. So I’m asking you. If you are following your own will, I won’t say anything further, as I don’t have the qualifications to do so. However, I, can’t help but getting angry at the people who are treating you this way. Just know that.”

The Unicorn fell silent.

This won't do, like this it's certain that I'm going to burst in anger. I'll end up imposing myself onto her. I take a deep breath in order to calm myself down.

"Hey lass, what are you saying from a little while ago? Are you touched in the head?"

Watching from the side my words propably look like nothing but a monologue, but to me the man's words are nothing but noise.

"Don't be noisy. I don't have the time now to be talking with you."

"This guy ...!?"

Saying that brusquely, as his face becomes a bright red he pulls out his sword, and he brands it at me. I thought this from the time I first saw him, he's too hot-tempered. Shouldn't people who become messengers be capable of making decisions more calmly. To send this type of people, it seems they didn't take the option of talking from the beginning, as I expected. By thinking that, I feel like the Prince is pitiful.

— It can't be helped, however I don't know if I'll be able to make it or not.

I adapted my throat to a Dragon's for a little while, took in a deep breath, and let out a roar as much as I could. (T/N: wild guess again~思いの限り咆哮をあげる。)

Was it because my neck is smaller than when I'm a Dragon, but my tone of voice was higher than normal, yet it seems it went well.

The earth, the air, making everything shook, it was such a powerful roar.

They didn't think that from a little girl's throat a Dragon's roar would come out, it seems they weren't even expecting that I'd let out a battle roar on top of it.

The man dropped his sword and became unable to stand up due to fear. Of course, the messenger who was in the back also became like that.

The ones at the back are too scared to look at me. But, with this they will stay quiet for a little while. I yelled until my ears reverberated with a metallic sound. They aren't getting in the way anymore.

[Thou, could thou be...]

"Don't mind my matters."

I immediately turned my throat back to that of a human's, and resumed our talk.

"You, the ones referred to as the Holy Beasts Unicorns, have no need to get hurt for the sake of these worthless human beings. Even when, they've hurt your child." (T/N: I believe there was a typo here, くらだない – not a warehouse, may have been written instead of くだらな

いゝ, – worthless xD)

Its golden eyes shook.

[No way.]

“They have taken your child hostage, right? ... It was fallen in the woods because of the acts of violence of these people.”

[Wha- Bastards, why such a thing!!] (TN: taking liberties with the ‘omae’ xD like, I’d have called them bastards...)

The Unicorn was clearly upset. Its white wings trembling, it was staring at them with wide open eyes.

And them as well, they were flabbergasted and surprised at me knowing something that nobody could have known.

[Is that, true... maybe.]

“Unfortunately. Yet that child is all right, because he is in a safe place receiving treatment.”

“Damn, answer me to my question!”

The man was again angrily shouting at me but I put him in place with a roar once more. But I don’t want to do so too much because my throat is a little sore.

The Unicorn had been silently thinking of something, but it stepped forward one step and stared directly at me.

“I see, ...That child, did he say something?”

“He repeatedly called for you. Hurry up and go to him.”

I told the Unicorn the place, and while saying [Sorry] and [Thank you], she shook off the human’s hands and dashed away. If she tried she could have parted with them at any time, but she could not because of them having taken its child hostage. And besides I bet she also had some sense of distrust in her heart towards the humans, or she would not have believed in my words so obediently.

“Hey! Chase after it!!” (T/N: watch me fail at thug speech.)

Some people went chasing after the Unicorn, but at her speed she’ll lose them and, as long as Timo is there, one, two, or several pursuers might be easily driven away.

“You lil’ girl! What have ya’ done!!” (T/N: ... bear with me with this xD)

“That’s what I want to say. You guys what have you done to her. You are not pure, moreover you guys who are not even maidens touched the Unicorn, even though it is a

taboo. And furthermore using violence.”

“What did you say? Sayin’ that lookin’ so self-important!! The Unicorn is ours!”

Although I’m glaring at them at most it feels like the hateful glare of a young girl. Aah, this is why I hate having a human body at such a time.

“What do we do, one of the few adult Unicorns ran away! What will His Majesty say...!!”

“As if I know! Though it’s fine if we return while bringing these people’s heads, right!!”

“But...!!”

“I am the leader here! Listen to what I say!!

Are they having a falling out now? They don’t have cooperation strength at aaall. Well, obviously they seem like they are the underling of an underling, and what’s more the garments they are wearing were tentatively chosen to look like uniforms but they don’t match at all. Please, I’d like you to send a better messenger since you are a large country. Or, I wonder if they were merely thinking of sending the underlying of an underlying or just someone who served the purpose? If it was like that then I’ll be angry.

“A falling out is unsightly.” (Vito)

“Stop cutting in while complaining, you lowly lass! Letting out that horrid voice...!! I’ll kill ya’ all startin’ from ya’!!”

“I don’t think you can kill me though.”

“I’m tellin’ ya’ you’re noisy! Shuddup!!!”

The man who was bright red in the face does brandish his sword towards me this time. Some voices calling my name from behind were heard.

I did not avoid it.

From the head to my hip, it slashed diagonally. Because of the momentum it carried I retreated a few steps, but I did not fall.

I tried touching my face with my hands, but no blood is coming out. Instead my skin turned into scales, and then went back to human skin with ‘crackle crackle’ sounds.

“I hurts~...”

I wasn’t cut but the impact was great. Although my skin had been protected by my scales, my insides had remained as a human’s, and received a full blow impact.

As I received a wound to the extent that it would not be strange if I died yet remained unhurt, the man’s face distorted and he retreated back. My clothes had also been cut, but

there is no problem because only a little was cut from my under my chest to my hip. The pain is also fine as long as I endure a little.

“Wha-... What are you-...!?”

” ‘Cause I, am not human.”

I’m human yet I’m not. I’m a dragon yet I’m not. This is me, but this is not my real appearance.

I’m a very ambiguous existence.

Even so I’m certainly here, trying to do things that I myself want to do.

“That’s why I don’t understand what you, as humans, are doing, not do I want to understand them. Much less the war between fellow countries, it doesn’t have anything to do with me. Even if as a result of my actions a war breaks out, it doesn’t have anything to do with me.”

Selfish, irresponsible, no matter what I’m called, it’s fine.

I drew in a big gulp of air, then let out a long breath. I was gradually getting tired of talking. From a while ago they’ve been noisy, calling me ‘lass, lass’. If you like lasses so much, should I smile like a cute lil’ girl for you? Either way, I’ll refrain from eating you. Because you guys, look like your taste is truly nasty.”

I won’t think that I have the attribute of a dark stomach at this time. (T/N: WG! – short for wild guess~ xD私って腹黒属性付いてんじゃないかって?、この時ほど思った事は無いよ。)

“Don’t think you’ll live to return home.”

I do not want to be seen too much when I transform into a Dragon. Because it doesn’t leave me with too many good feelings. It feels like changing clothes in public, for example.

But now there was no time to be considering such things.

Because, I’m angry.

It was just, aggravating.

Because they’re excessively selfish.

To let myself be overcome by such anger, this might be the first time.

I close my eyes. My body gradually becomes feverish, and I know that I’m changing. My form becomes large, my skin changes into pure white scales, wings grow from my back, and three horns ended up growing from my head. Thankfully my whole body is covered in light so it is not so grotesque. It is just a white silhouette that becomes larger. It’s like the transformation scene of a Mahou Shoujo, but rather than a Mahou Shoujo I’m a Dragon. (T/N: mahou shoujo = magical girl.)

“Dr, Dragon!?”

“Damn! Was it true that there was a contract?!?!”

Someone shouts.

If the matter of the ‘contract’ and so on surges up now, I don’t care. It’s fine for them to think whatever they want.

It takes an instant to take the figure of a Dragon.

I inhale a breath, then I began mercilessly vomiting fire. As screams are heard several men who were in front of me become charred black in an instant. There were also several bold humans that tried to challenge me, but such puny swords won’t pass through my scales. I bite their heads off then toss them away.

I crushed those running about trying to escape and breathed fire towards those that had run away farther. I hate the smell of burnt humans. Because even I think it is cruel.

“This, this monster!”

I heard a voice screaming that from somewhere. I got pissed off at it so I directed one more fire in inquiry towards that direction and I couldn’t hear it anymore.

I’m certainly a monster. A creature that can take the shape of those whom it feeds on, killing humans without hesitation. But even so I’m a girl of marriageable age (female). Won’t I feel a little hurt when being called a monster?

To tell me such a thing now, do you have no courtesy? It’s a fact that I’ve behaved properly so far. (T/N: WG~ それほどの行為をしてきてるのは事実なんだし.)

Repeatedly biting them off and tossing them away, trampling over them and breathing fire, the living things are no more, and it suddenly it became quiet.

A few people escaped, and I burned them down on the highway; the blood, as well as the blood covered human corpses were rolling about.

Although things like war might carry a more terrible devastation, but this is still a terrible sight. Who will clear this up? As I ended my rampage I’m feeling hungry, but I don’t plan on eating.

I ended up doing something outrageous if I say so myself.

It’s a thing such that my head may hurt every time I recall this.

But.

— Oh, it was really so refreshing.

Translator's lair~

Going for male for the Unicorn's puppy- errrr, cub, errrr, chick. hatchling. baby. Child. Whatever. (What do you call baby horses, anyway?) It's cause JP is gender neutral, so I can't tell if it's a boy or a girl unless I see what color are its baby shoes: blue or pink. Let's go with blue for now~

I get the feeling this chapter was full of translator's notes?whatever~ xD

I wish to release the next chapter as soon as possible. I was gonna release them together, because, next one is... next one is!! *no spoilers from me~* coughcough. Yet, dese chaptarghs, y u gettin' longeeehrs!! Either way, I warned you!

Have a nice beauty sleep~

Dragon Life Chapter 24

Chapter 24

T/N: Warning: people with heart problems might feel excessive palpitations when reading this chapter. Oh, and healthy people might feel them too.

Things you SHOULD know:

1) バカカップル – BAKAPPURU – short for Baka Couple (バカ-カップル). It means love birds; sickeningly sweet and soppy couple. (...riajuu should explode? Somehow that came to mind...)

2) the Prince speaks using 'omae' when talking to others (to say 'You'). That is offensive now but was formerly honorific. It is used to refer to someone who is your equal or inferior. Hence if a lowlife calls you omae it's an insult xD but if a Prince uses it, it is just normal; he's at the top of the social ranks of this world, after all. So I translated it as 'you'. Yay for useless note! :D he also speaks casually, so it just fits; it's not like he's meaning to insult anyone.

Also, more bloodplay (?) ahead.

Chapter 24

The place where I belong. The respective expectations. Gears that do not engage.

Question.

What is this world for me?

Answer.

It's kind of the mysterious world into which I accidentally happened to wander. Even if the memories of my human world are fuzzy enough to wonder if they are just delusions, at least I think this isn't a dream because it hurts if I pinch my cheek.

Question.

Why I am living as a dragon?

Answer.

By accident. By chance. I do not know what happened for things to become like this, but now that it's happened it can't be helped. Whether I am a human who went inside a Dragon, or whether in my previous life I was a human being of a different world. The answer is not within my brain so that answer has been dropped.

Question.

What will I do if I can return to my former world as a human?

Answer.

I won't know until it happens. So I won't think about it now. ... What's wrong with me as a human? The me who is not a Dragon, is it still me? I've no idea.

Question.

What are humans to me?

Answer.

They are the food I need to live. They are my important food, and they are also my friends. It ... is inconsistent, but that is the answer.

Question.

What to do if a war breaks out?

Answer.

Doesn't matter. ...I said so, but it does make me a little anxious. So even if by not wanting to lose those important to me I'll surely end up getting involved, I don't want to regret anything.

Question.

What is the Captain to me?

Answer.

A delicious human on a par with the finest ingredients. And, — someone I don't want to lose.

After returning to my human figure, I rush over to the Captain's side. He had been supported by the Prince earlier, but now he just sat on the ground without support. The Unicorn's ability to stop time has probably disappeared, because the other Knights were standing up on their own despite their injuries.

I'm also worried about the Unicorn who flew towards her child, but now the Captain is my first priority. To think that once again I'm heading towards the Captain in a straight line regardless of there being other wounded men, I am truly not thinking of something other than the Captain.

"Captain, are you alive?"

The bleeding at his shoulder seems fierce but the wound is not as bad as I thought. When I lifted his bangs with my hand because I couldn't see his complexion very well, dark eyes appeared.

It surprised me.

In spite of everything, the Captain was laughing.

— What's with that face. Even though I had been worried.

The Captain gently grabbed the hand that had scooped up his bangs. My grabbed hand smoothly slid down to his cheek. Because he held my palm as if to place a kiss to it and nestled up to me like a cat, I froze up with a clicking sound. Ignoring that, the Captain surrounded my hip with his arm, rested his head on the nape of my neck and giggled.

His terribly unruly bright green hair that is being subdued feels ticklish when in contact with the nape of my neck.

On top of that, he released a big sigh on my neck, making me become lost and unable to understand what's going on, so I still could not get out from my petrified state.

—Huh? What does this mean? I, I was worrying about the Captain's injuries. If possible, I was even thinking something like 'please let me lick some of that blood off again because it would be a waste.' Since he's larger than me, I can't move if he holds me. Wh- What on earth should I do?

Despite me becoming flustered and flailing my arms around at the unexpected reaction, the Captain murmured next to my ear in a sigh.

“—I found it.”

What did you find?

...Ah, that's right. That's what he meant. Since I submerged myself in my anger I totally forgot. That I became a Dragon in front of the eyes of the Captain and the rest.

What do I do?

Although I had made my resolution, I feel lonely when I think I won't be able to stay at the castle anymore. I haven't said a proper farewell to Chiffon and the girls and because I escaped in secret they must be worried about now. And if I escape to another country I'll have to look for another work, right? But I think that jobs with such excellent working conditions don't really exist. It can't be helped because I'm reaping what I sowed. Or I also have the option of returning to living as a Dragon. Just to look for a place seems difficult, but it is also an option.

Thinking about it after having calmed down, I want to hug my head while saying 'What have I done.'

But everyone would have died if I hadn't done that. I'd have hated that. So I should not regret it.

For now I will try to escape from between the Captain's arms. But it was impossible.

—Why! Why won't he release me!!

There's many reasons and apologies I must tell to everyone, but contrary to releasing me, the Captains is still nestling up to me like a cat, trapping me between his arms with great strength.

I'm sure, the thing called 'hug' must be like this. Even if I have no experience in romance I can tell this is one mighty embrace.

There is no woman whose chest won't throb when receiving such a hug. Though I'm in a passionate embrace like the ones that express love with the whole body as seen in dramas, only now I've decided to agree to it.

I mean, ...the coziness feels too good. I ended up thinking, 'I want to stay in his arms forever', 'I want to feel this warmth forever', and 'It would be great if time was stopped now.'

To stop thinking and to feel the other person with your whole body.

Giving up, I instinctively stretched my arms towards his back.

It's not the time to be immersing ourselves in a dreamy mood. I must apologize!!

I decided to say what I had to while remaining in that position because it couldn't be helped. (T/N: how convenient xD) My voice was a little broken.

"Captain, as well as Your Highness, and everyone. ... There is no excuse for me to have remained silent until now. As you can see I am not human, and, I believe I can't return to the castle anymore."

'Ah, but please stop doing things like subjugations. Because I'm moving to a place as far away as possible, I won't cause you trouble'. After I said that, everyone's different facial expressions turned into gaping befuddled faces as they stared at me.

Is it so hard to believe that I'm a Dragon? I still don't believe it myself, but I think there's no need to get surprised to that extent. As for the Vice-Captain, he just keeps gaping.

"Vito, why?"

Finally a gap was created between the Captain's body and mine. With this I can breathe properly.

"Why, you say... because, I'm a flesh-eating Dragon? Captain, I, have eaten your left arm, and have been thinking of eating you whole, ...to tell you my real intentions, I'm thinking of eating you a little even now."

“Yeah, you were eating as if it was delicious. Also, Vito, if you want to eat me, you should do so.”

— What is such a dazzling smile! And I’m close to his face! Our foreheads are touching! It makes me sigh! HoldonCaptain areyousane no matter how you look at us now we’re a Bakappuru arewenot Captain! ...Is me the one that needs to calm down?

In the first place the Captain is odd. He was like that from before, but why can he say something like ‘it’s fine to eat me’ so naturally. Saying ‘eating it as if it was delicious’ as if it was another person’s problem. A normal person absolutely wouldn’t say that. Just how much does he love Dragons, because it’s impossible to like something so much to allow oneself to be eaten. Not to mention, why isn’t he surprised at knowing that the servant that stayed by his side for a while is a Dragon? He adapts too quickly. I’m puzzled by his reaction which is one step ahead of me.

“If I eat you you will die.”

“That’s right.”

“... So, I’m telling you you will die.”

“...Yup?”

You don’t get it, Captain!! Isn’t it the end if you die?!

“I mean, if with that Vito will feel happy, I’ll also be happy.”

Because I’m happy?!?! I won’t be feeling anything like happiness if you die!! ... And I became tired of retorting to you already!! (T/N: it says ‘to tsukkomu’ xD)

“If you say so! The blood of your wound is making me anxious from earlier, I will suck it all! Like a vampire! Because I rampaged my stomach became a little empty!”

“Please help yourself?”

The Captain, simply, laughed softly with his usual smile. I’m getting annoyed at being treated so lightly while I myself am so agitated. (T/N: this sentence was a pain in the armaggedon for me.)

Hey, Dragons have guts! I received permission from the Captain and I’m really a little hungry after rampaging with reckless abandon. The timing is perfect. At the same I was also troubled and tired of retorting to the Captain. Just don’t go back on your words at this time.

Timidly approaching my face to his shoulder, I search for the wound by trailing with my mouth. Although the clothes wet with blood were in the way it could not be helped, I found the wound through the gap in the slightly torn clothes, but maybe because it was a cut wound I couldn’t suck it properly, so I decided to lick it. I prayed that I would not tear his flesh with my teeth by mistake, yet I said to myself ‘Well it’s not like I’m in Dragon form anyway and I have everything under control over here so it’s fine.’ Probably.

Dragging my tongue, as the warm blood that has entered my mouth is of the finest quality, a rarely acquired sensation spreads through my body from my throat.

— It’s alright, I won’t runaway like before.

The Captain kept on hugging me with that pleasant-feeling warmth, while stroking my head. The same as that time, as if I’m being caressed, a gentle, warm heat is transmitted towards me.

Am I not a mammal but a bloodal? (T/N: fail at translating a joke: she says she is not a 乳飲子 – milk drinking child – Chichi-in-ko, but a 血飲子 – blood drinking child – Chi-in-ko. It’s

basically because chichi – milk/breast sounds similar to chi – blood.)

But it calms me down, and it gives a similar warmth.

— Hey wait, me. Isn't the Captain wounded. What are you doing drinking blood from someone wounded! Ain't you useless! And to be licking the blood is too perverted! And certainly I'm doing it in front of everyone! It's too embarrassing!! (T/N: bloodplay xD bondage is a kink of the past now.)

I may have lost my sanity at being misled by the temptation of the blood in front of my eyes. When I separated my face from the wound in a panic, I was surprised by meeting the Captain's face laughing gently at point-blank range.

"Is it fine, already?"

"It is that, Captain is an injured person. You'll really die if I continue to take anymore."

While whispering 'So?', the hand that was stroking my head moves as if drifting and wipes the blood attached to my lips. And thinking about the blood that got attached to his fingers, he licked it.

"...It tastes of iron."

My head feels like it's going to explode.

What's this person doing!? 'Don't you have cream over there?' 'Huh? Where where?' 'Look, here!' 'Oh it's true! Ah, don't eat it!!' Isn't this just like a Bakappuru!! (T/N: bloodplay's gonna be real popular after dis xD)

The Captain giggles as he watched my face that became downright red. He has done nothing but laugh from a while ago. The feeling that I'm being teased is mortifying.

"...Please release me soon."

"Don't wanna."

"Please don't say things a child throwing a tantrum would..."

I'm at my limit already. Read the atmosphere! The atmosphere! And look around! It is not full of dumbfounded faces around!!

"Lutoria, I know how you feel, but how about you release her? I also want to hear her story."

The Prince, who found it difficult to keep on watching, spoke for my sake. Thank you Prince. Now that I think about it I was being watched just now, ... too embarrassing. We- Well the me who did those things is also me after all. Let's just say it couldn't be helped because I lost to the temptation due to hunger. (T/N: Wild guess for the last two sentences~) ... By the way, when he said 'I know how you feel', what did he mean? It is surely because the Captain likes Dragons? It's that, right? There's no other reason, right? Right?

Being told so by the Prince the Captain reluctantly let me go. I was able to stand up and joyfully head in the Prince's and the others' direction, but my body began trembling at the presence of some arms surrounding me at the waist from behind. This time he buried his head in my hair when holding me from behind. He did it excessively naturally so I didn't have the time to resist.

"Ca, Captain?"

"What?"

“No ..., it’s nothing.”

No way did I ever think of him being such a sexual harassing demon. I decided to ignore it all altogether since if I reacted to every little thing I’ll never be able to talk to the Prince.

The Prince was smiling wryly when I looked at him. He laughed! This disappointing Prince!!

“I must say my thanks to you. ... It is inexcusable, but you saved us.”

“It is me the one who ended up doing something inexcusable, I behaved too excessively. Because there were several people who intended to retreat however... I killed almost all of them.”

There might have been some innocent people, but I killed them without hesitation. Such side of myself, was a little scary. I wonder if I’m strange, but those people also had a family, and friends. They had people who will mourn their deaths. Even if I thought so, I still

killed them. From the bottom of my heart I was telling myself the excuse that I did it because I was angry, even if it would have been enough if I just drove them off by threatening them.

I’m a failure as a human.

“Had you not taken care of them they would have taken care of us, please don’t worry about it. Besides I vaguely suspected things might come to this.”

“... If that was the case. Why did you not bring the Fire Drakes?”

The Prince’s face frowns. If he knew this was going to happen, by bringing even one Fire Drake, or by bringing more people, he might have been able to avoid this situation.

While suspecting this he still did not do anything? Is it because he believed in the other party with foolish sincerity? I truly can't understand what the Prince is thinking.

"In the first place, for the Prince of the whole country to go receive a messenger? Who let you do s

such a dangerous thing!"

"My retainers have kept silent for me... but as you say this was a mistake of my own judgement. I'm sorry."

"Please do not apologize to me who am a mere servant."

I'll be trouble if you apologize to me so obediently. And besides there should be others to whom he should apologize.

Smiling wryly and saying 'That's right,' the Prince faces the wounded Knights.

"I'm sorry. Because of my erroneous judgment I involved you in such a thing. Forgive me."

A single Knight walked forward to the apologetic Prince.

"Prince, please raise your head. It is our role to follow you, no matter how dangerous. We have always been aware of the danger. And thus there is no need to apologize for such a thing."

To say things clearly, it is the First Knight Corps' Captain. I forgot his name. Only because of his pure white short hair which burns the eyes and his matching skin is that I'm able to remember that he is the First Knight Corps' Captain. At those words, every Knight nods, or

adds something. The Prince is a little too serious, with a strong sense of justice, and above all he is naively honest to a fault. At the time of the subjugation he had said he wanted to go too, he's probably a person who will feel regretful if he doesn't act on his own. As he is apologizing for 'such a thing', this might have happened many times. When thinking that, I sympathize with the Knights that always get involved. But, that may be what's good about the Prince. He is someone who thinks of his friends, and is considerate of others.

The Prince turns around to me.

"You really helped us. About the previous matter with the Punitive Corps, surely... I wouldn't have thought that it was you who was the Earth Dragon."

I'm sorry that I'm just a lass. (T/N: the MT translated it as such: 'It was bad in the puss.' Don't know whether to laugh or cry xD)

"It's fine already. Please do not mind me."

"But -"

The Prince's words vacillate. I could guess what he didn't say just by thinking of it a little.

Although the mood was good, his gaze was cunning. I mean, the gazes of the Knights have been painful for a while now. There are curious gazes and looks of expectation. You are large adults, don't direct such gazes towards such a tiny lass.

I said to the Prince with a sigh.

"...Making a contract, is it?"

“That is…”

“Certainly for you all I might be the “Legendary Earth Dragon.” To make a contract and to lead you to victory in war might be my role according to you. But, it is me the one that decides my life. By descending to a human settlement and living intermingled with humans, it would be a lie to say I don’t feel affection for this country. But… please do not place such expectations in a mere young girl. Please don’t push them onto me. They are too heavy.”

As I clearly stated so, the Prince became silent.

The other people made confused looks as well, but did not say anything. I don’t know what they say amongst themselves about what kind of existence the Earth Dragon is, nor do I know if there’s some kind of belief regarding this. And they are also accepting that I’m crushing that. I mean, it’s too heavy. I’m a little afraid that if I don’t reject them clearly, I may be coaxed in the future. Since there’s a little room for me to end up being dragged along, it’s best if I state the things I want to say.

...But maybe I said too much. After all they are thinking for their country’s sake. Yet I don’t feel even a little remorseful to break that for my own interests.

“Vito.”

The Captain whispered by my ear in a voice only I could hear. It’s a bad voice for the heart.
(T/N: I just remembered he was there all along xD)

“If it’s heavy, it’s fine not to carry it. All of it, entrust it to me.”

“... You’ll be crushed by it if you do that.”

“I won’t be. I’ll be fine if you just, stay here.”

I twist my neck and look backwards. The Captain's face was close enough to induce a sigh.

"'Here' means, where."

"Here."

Tightly, he hugs me even more intently with his long arms. His warmth is transmitted through my back. Though his shoulder is certainly hurt he is not showing any indication of pain, on the contrary he was smiling.

Probably because I had to look up to him, his black pupils were clearly visible under his long bangs. If all of me ended up being sucked in by his eyes, how comfortable would that be. Without any worry, without any thought, to be dyed by his pure color. How happy would I be.

"... Really, only you. Only you'd say that to me."

Unlike the Prince and the others, he doesn't have expectations of me, saying that it's fine for me to just be there. As a Knight of the country is that fine? But for me, how happy does that make me?

"I'm sorry for saying terrible things the other day."

"Yeah, I do not care."

"Really?"

"Really. So, stay here."

If he looks at me with those eyes I can't refuse. I cannot shake him off. It's like being stared at by an abandoned puppy, his dark eyes are adorable. Not only that. That he didn't reject me when learning that I was a Dragon, his slightly hoarse tone of voice as he whispers from those cherry colored lips, and the embrace that gives off a strong but gentle warmth, everything, — surely, I like him.

I heaved a small sigh.

“...I understand. I'll remain in the castle for a while.”

Saying that, the Captain makes a delighted expression.

Clearly, the Prince's face was shining.

As expected should I have quit after all? I thought so but, just for now I want to be immersed in this warmth.

I can allow myself as much.

Translator's lair:

Should I call 911? I think I'm dying of moe-overdose. Yup. I think I'll call them...

Also, please somebody kill that captain. It is impossible to be so cute, this guy needs to die, even I can feel the coziness he emits towards Vito. I wanna kidnap him or something and yeah... the 1D and 3D line is becoming blurry for me... he's dangerous. Subjugate him, please. You don't know how hard it was not to fill the chapter with comments...(though I did input a lot in the end, I wanted to write so many more xD) I mean, this guy is like made of moe or something. He made me fangirl the whole chapter. Yup, 'to fangirl' is a verb. Officially since just now.

Next chapter is not as ... mmm... heart-throb inducing? as this one, so that one will have to wait a bit. Your DL need should have been satiated for a bit. I think. This isn't considered a

cliffhanger, right? Doesn't look like one to me...

Random thing; did you know that the word 'apology' comes from the name of greek god Apollo? I found out not too long ago; each of Plato's works were dedicated in some way or another to a greek god, sometimes it was expressed in the title or within the work. The Apology is thus attributed to have been dedicated to Apollo. Odd huh? I really wonder what relation does 'apologize' has to Apollo, god of the Sun, a more spiritual Sun than Helios. Male ideal, male beauty, poetry and music... erm... perfection. Really, such a weird connection. xD

Chapter 25

A brief tranquility and the unstoppable rumor.

I was going to return flying to the castle, but as I remembered the female Unicorn I decided to visit Timo's house.

In the Prince's group there are injured men, so they'll go back to a nearby town to give them treatment, then head back to the castle. I could also fly while carrying some people on my back, but that may raise strange expectations so I refrained from doing so.

I think it won't do to go across the world with just kindness, it's also important to know when to refuse.

"So, why is the Captain coming along as well?"

Yes, for some reason even the Captain is coming with me. He's walking beside me with a smiling face. Maybe the length of his legs is at fault but the way he walks looks extremely relaxed compared to me who am walking normally. The difference in compass is frustrating. But I know that he is willing to match my pace.

"I cannot let Vito alone."

Aren't you mistaking me for a small animal?

“Unfortunately, worrying is your useless I am—”

“A Dragon, but I worry even so.”

I think it's unfair for him to use the generic term 'Dragon' without saying 'The Earth Dragon'.

Won't I end up having weird expectations? (T/N: that he sees her as more than just the thing he has always admired. This dragon may actually be surprisingly dense xD)

In the first place how can he be so carefree even though he is also an injured person, and he only received first aid treatment.

“Vito”

“Yes?”

“Hm.”

— What's with this hand. 'Paw', 'give me your paw' is it, are you asking me to give you my paw!? I'm a Dragon but I don't have the intention to become the Captain's pet in the slightest!!

As I was staring at him with a sharp gaze, he grabbed my left hand with a wry smile.

Does this mean he intends to forcefully making me shake his hand!? I was thinking that but, somehow it seems it appears to be a misunderstanding on my part.

His right palm is superimposed on my left hand, and is holding it gently. Whilst I stared at our connected hands dumbfoundedly, we resumed to walk into the forest with me being led by the hand. My train of thought could not keep up with this. I wonder if this is the so-called 'happily walking hand-in-hand.' I'd done this before with Chiffon and our younger female coworkers and I didn't present any resistance to it, but since this is the first time I've held hands with a man, I feel, like, perplexed. His hand which is bigger than mine is gently wrapping up mine. Even I can tell that I've become tense.

We are not two lovers holding hands but that's for the best. If it was like that my heart wouldn't hold on.

By not raising a complaint and saying 'There is no helping it' with a sigh, we go walking together like that.

But you know, the truth is, the warmth transmitted to my left hand was really nice and it made me happy.

Subtitle. Because my nature is not 'tsundere.' D-Don't be mistaken!

I get the feeling I ended up making a tsundere imitation. I don't come across as a tsundere to myself. In this new life I've discovered that what I possess is the pitch-black stomach attribute. Comparing it to a squadron, it'd be nice to be assigned to the amber colored role, huh. (TN: literal translation cause I don't know what she's talking about. I guess a supply corps?) In the kingdom-building stories, the easiest is always the supporting role so please make me into that. I say that but, there are no people nor gods to entrust such a thing to. If there is a god for discarding things there's a god for picking them up, it's said that there exist myriads of gods*, but it's doubtful whether there are such things in this world. Humans created the God worshiped God. If so, what kind of existences are the so-called animals that have received divine protection and the sacred great trees? I hadn't thought of this before but if thought so lately; could it be that those misters Great Trees have been influenced by my existence? Since Lau said that I exist in order to keep the balance of the world. Should I look it up when I have the time? I may be able to figure it out. (*Suteru kami areba hirou kami ari: (idiom) 'even if you feel that you've been abandoned, there's people who will help you a bit further ahead. Even if unfortunate or things or trouble happen, it is not necessary to be pessimist'. I had to keep it like that and not replace it with a localized expression since she keeps on talking about gods afterwards, although the part about the 'myriad of gods' [8 million gods] is also a related idiom. Further explanation in here (Japanese): <http://kotowaza-allguide.com/su/suterukamiareba.html>)

As we were walking, I let go of his hand because Timo's house came into sight. Captain seemed displeased but I forcibly let go. Because if Timo sees us like that I'll be teased so that's a no.

Sometime after knocking on the door, a girl with both amethyst colored hair and eyes comes out.

"Oh, welcome!"

No matter how you look at her she hasn't lived more than 10 years. I wonder if in this world your appearance becomes younger the longer you live, as it seems to be for Lord Cleric.

“It’s about the Unicorn? I’m properly looking after them, you know. (T/N: she says ‘kanojo-tachi’, plural for females, so the baby is also a girl winged pony.) ...By the way, that person is? He seems like a Knight from Alvina.”

Timo is scrutinizing the Captain who is next to me, while cocking her head. It looks like she was able to guess that he is a Knight from Alvina Kingdom by his clothes, but as expected it seems she wouldn’t be able to know where he’s from even if she is truly a self-proclaimed witch. Like this, as I was pondering on whether it was fine to introduce him myself, the Captain saved me by introducing himself on his own.

“I am Alvina Kingdom’s Fourth Knight Corps Captain, Lutoria Beallini.”

I wonder if the Captain is also using polite speech since I told him before hand that she is a witch that has lived for several centuries. Now that he says it, it’s the first time I hear the Captain’s full name. How very late into the game.

Lutoria Beallini, is it. I’ll memorize it. It is easy to remember, unlike the name of a prince from somewhere.

“Are you that Dragon Rider?”

“‘That’?” (Vito says this. probably)

Timo opens her eyes wide, and places her hand on her small mouth with a surprised look.

What did she mean by ‘that.’ I’m amazed by Timo’s gaping reaction.

“My bad, maybe you don’t know? When you say ‘Alvina Kingdom’s Fourth Knight Corps’ Captain’, isn’t he the person known as ‘The Flying Dragon.’ Since it still reached my ears even when I live this far out, famous or whatever, of course even the small children in the neighborhoods have heard of it.” (T/N: check note at the end for rant about that name xD)

What’s that? He had such a nickname? If it’s such an embarrassing name I’d politely decline if it was me. Flesh-eating Dragon is enough for me. But how should I say it, the Captain was such an amazing person all along? Certainly his abilities with the sword and when handling the Fire Drakes are great, but I didn’t know he was that famous. I was honestly surprised.

Timo was looking at him with sparkling eyes as if she had found something interesting, however she suddenly made a strange face.

“But, oh well, the rumor stopped going around some years ago.”

“... Maybe, the cause was the death of my Fire Drake.”

This, did we step on a land mine?

As I looked at the Captain his facial expression was darkening. I wonder if it’s something he doesn’t want to recall too much.

“I see. Dragon Riders can’t let out their true strength if they don’t have a Dragon with a bond. ...Is in not enough already? To stop the mourning, and to find a new Dragon soon.”

So, Timo, why are you staring at me now.

I wonder what kind of child was Captain's Fire Drake. Certainly it passed away in a small-scale war one or two years ago, right. It is a lie to say I don't mind it. And, from now on won't he have to shoulder the fact that he will be influenced by not being able to exert all of his inherent strength? Sadly Vice-Captain's Reina also has an injury in the leg. It's almost the same as a situation where the top 2 people with the most war potential are absent. ... However I don't want them to fight, if possible.

"Fufu, what's with standing around and talking, come in."

Was it because I was deep in thought, but I was startled when Timo spoke.

As we said 'Excuse me' and entered the house, the Unicorn was in there. It fit inside the house quite well despite its size. I believe the entrance door is large but isn't it quite a stretch for her to be able to enter through there? Is the child still sleeping? It was making peaceful sleeping breaths atop the table.

When the Unicorn noticed us, she came closer and made a soft neigh.

[Thou art a lifesaver for my child. We thank thee.] (T/N: I bet my horses don't speak in shakespearean. Then again, my horses don't have wings... also:<http://lingoiam.com/EnglishtoShakespearean>. rofl.)

"No, I didn't do much; actually the one who healed her was Timo."

I just brought the child here.

[But had thee not found her, about now Our child would be...]

The Unicorn's line of sight is directed to her child. Her gaze is warm; it is truly the image of a mother watching over her child.

Those people had said, she was disposable. I wonder what did they mean by that, but now what matters to me the most is that these girls are safe; I'm genuinely relieved.

"I'll have these girls in my care for a while. It's safe here, and if their pursuers come then I'll chase them away."

"Thank you."

Now that she mentions it what happened to the people who came after the Unicorn? I wonder if they may be lost in the woods. I could reach here safely because I grew accustomed to the forest at the foot of Vizannu Mountains, but people unaccustomed to forests are likely to get lost.

"Ah, right. There's something I want to ask. Do you happen to know Alvina Kingdom's Lord Cleric?"

Wondering about it not being strange if she has lived for several centuries, but I ended up watching as Timo's facial expression turned into one of clear dislike.

"... That guy, about that guy, I don't even want to remember him!"

"D-Did something happen?"

As I was thinking that maybe she has some unpleasant memories as well, suddenly her hair became wild and she began to speak in a dreadfully menacing manner.

“How many hundreds of years has it been, it was when that guy was still not bound to that place. The crystallized magical power that I made by giving it my most earnest effort, he swallowed it!! He swallowed it in one gulp!? To think that I had finally succeeded to crystallize magical power! Don’t you think that’s cruel!? Even though it took me a hundred years to achieve it!? I absolutely won’t forgive him!!”

For something you devoted a hundred years to make to disappear in an instant, everybody would get angry, right? I deeply feel for you, Timo. Nevertheless you are scary when angered. I was worrying about whether the Unicorn’s foal would wake up by the loud voice, but it seems everything’s all right.

About that time when Lord Cleric was not tied to that place is, was it previously possible for him to move around? I’m curious about why he became like that, but somehow I feel like I shouldn’t ask so I couldn’t say it.

“...I’m in the mood to say that but, the timing is perfect, could I bother you to bring that guy a message?”

As suddenly as an erupting volcano subsides, Timo returns to her usual tone.

When I nodded, this time she made a serious expression and said.

“— ‘You all may have another enemy.’”

“Enemy, is it?”

When speaking of the enemy of Alvina Kingdom then it is Tiruzoto Country. Or is it that another country could become our enemy? As I said that, Timo shook her head.

“This future is just my own conjecture. That’s why I can’t really tell what will happen, and... there’s only one thing I can say, and it is that one day, and incident that will throw the whole continent into chaos might occur.”

“It will be a war, right.”

“It is not a war. You are not necessarily wrong, but it’s not like a war in between fellow countries, it’s a more devastating and complicated matter. By listening to your story, it makes me think, ‘isn’t the fact that Tiruzoto is trying to rush the war to absorb other countries related to this issue somehow?’ Well, even if we think about it now there’s nothing we can do about it so let’s end it here.”

A complicated and devastating thing, what could it be? I wonder if it means that something worse than a war between Tiruzoto and Alvina countries will happen? Vice captain had said that Tiruzoto might be trying to conquer the continent. And this matter is associated with that. I don’t understand this at all.

“The boring talk ends here, I have some delicious pastries so shall we make tea? And I also want to listen properly to what you guys have to say.”

Did you say delicious pastries? Eat eat! I definitely want to eat them!

Turning away completely from what I had been thinking until now, my head was already filled by sweets.

It's fine if you call me a self-centered person. Candy is the best.

After that Timo inquired about various things but I intend to falsify anything regarding (what happened with) the Captain. You know, like I ate him, for example. But it might have been discovered already, maybe. She frequently stared at Captain's left arm, so if she said 'Hooh, so it's like that,' with a face full of knowing intent, I won't say any lie!! Because in the end she thoroughly listened to me. And she always answered to me after all. Although Timo looked satisfied with this, I'm feeling disheartened. Girls sure do like to talk. Though she doesn't have someone to talk to since she lives at such a place.

Incidentally she also cured the Captain's wound. Actually it was bothering me a lot but I couldn't do anything about it, so it was really helpful. I won't lose to the blood's temptation anymore!

When we decided to go back because the day began to darken gradually, Timo said to us, "Come at any time, you'll be welcome here." As we went out the sun was going down, as expected, but to return to the castle on foot would take too long and I don't feel like camping either.

Then the answer is only one.

However, I'm fine with that but what to do about the Captain. There is quite a distance from here to the town, and it hurts my conscience to thrust him away after he separated from the Prince and followed me here.

Then, the answer is, only one after all.

I'm really sweet towards the Captain, am I not.

“Captain, will you ride on me to the castle?”(*)

I had forgotten the delicate subject.

The Captain was making a blank face, but when I took on my Dragon form his eyes shone and immediately answered, ‘I’ll ride.’

Lowering my upper body, he rode on my back with the light weight of his body. We don’t have something like a saddle or reins as the Fire Drakes do so if I’m careless in my flight he might fall. Although i was worried and nervous because it was the first time someone rode on my back, it went all right because I flew slowly. The moment I took off was the most terrifying, yet the Captain didn’t fall or anything since he was thankfully firmly holding onto my back.

And also it felt a little good to have the weight of a single human being on my back. Maybe because I’m always flying alone, but I didn’t think I’d be this happy to be able to share this line of sight with someone else.

We fly in the good weather, in a perfectly clear sky and bathing in the sunlight. Feeling very refreshed, my mood became as if I could forget all the bad things.

Looking downwards we can see small villages and towns here and there, and we can see past the lands and mountains.

I wanted to see the many things I usually watch, so I ended up rising in altitude. I can also fly above the clouds, yet because the oxygen is thin over there I desisted this time. Under normal circumstances I'd fly at high places with this very body, and I find it natural that it's hard to breathe over there but if I end up flying above the clouds now the Captain might faint.

Because I became scared by thinking that, this time I decided to continue flying humbly. When my flying becomes unstable a wry laugh reaches me from behind. Even though I'm worrying over here.

I landed at a deserted place in front of the castle, then let the Captain off and took on my human figure.

It's strange that I feel no resistance to turning into a Dragon or turning into a human in front of the Captain

"Were you alright?"

"I was surprised, because you flew higher, and faster, than the Fire Drakes."

"Really?"

He's curiously agitated. While we were flying he was at ease but maybe that was because I was going at a splendid speed so he couldn't talk; this is considered fast-talking for him.

"Will you let me ride again?"

Because he said so without worrying about his hair that was disordered by the wind, it made me think, 'He really likes Dragons a lot, huh.'

I replied while standing on tiptoes and using my hand as a comb to fix the tall Captain's hair.

"If we have the chance, ok."

After that, the Captain parted with me with much difficulty since the Prince hadn't gotten here yet and he should go welcome him. He was terribly reluctant to do so, but I was relieved as it seems he will do the work he must do. No, I respect him. As I was thinking 'with this I can sleep peacefully in my bed,' 'were Chiffon and the girls worrying about me?' 'it's fine if I deliver Lord Cleric tomorrow?' and the like, while I was returning to the room, I wonder from where it was leaked, but the fact that I was the Earth Dragon had been discovered.

— W H Y

Translator's Lair:

有翼飛竜: how the heck i'm supposed to translate that xD Yuu-yoku hiryuu (propably). To have-wings-flying-dragon. If it's a flying dragon then of course it has wings!! Such a redundant title!! Maybe that's also part of why Vito wanted to retort, apart from it just being embarrassing. Going with The Flying Dragon for now cause it sounds prettier. If you have any suggestions or would actually like for him to be nicknamed 'The Winged Flying Dragon', please do let me know.

(*) (T/N: once you've read too much of some obscure things, this line can never be innocent to me, I had to write it in a round-about way so that my mind could be at peace... original line was very simple: 'will you ride me there?' something like that... 隊長さん、乗っていきます

か？ I guess it doesn't sound odd in Japanese... or is it just me? xD)

Chapter 26

Dragon, it's essential to surrender. Do it, bravely.

The beginning of this was, as I was walking in the castle thinking of going back to the room, I noticed that I was the subject of sneaky and secret talks behind my back. At first I thought it was a talk about the nobles' love affairs that tend to become rumors within the castle. However they sent fluttering*and peeking looks my way*, so as I thought it was weird, I strained my ears, and surely they weren't talking about such things; the talks where even about me. (T/N: *it sort of rhymes in jp.: CHIRACHIRA to kochira wo chirami shitari[...])

[Look, that's the one from the rumors.]

[Isn't she still a kid?]

[But she eats humans? I'm afraid.]

[So the truth is she's a monster?]

[The country will be at peace with this.]

[So the contractor was real?]

[So it can turn into a Dragon? I want to try seeing that]

[How terrifying] (T/N: it says 'okkanee', Japanese modern form of okkanashi – apparently it means to be afraid. ([link in jp for okkanee: here](#), [link for okkanashi \(jp\): here](#)))

The moment I heard them, I felt my whole body go cold with dread.

— How was I discovered? ...Why!? What happened!

The information network is too fast. The Prince hasn't come back yet, even though I was planning on having the silencing talk that I forgot to have with him before.

It's impossible that it was the Captain. There's absolutely no way that he let others know about this in such a short period of time.

So who the heck did it!!

[Really, that child?]

[Apparently it was written in a carrier pigeon that was sent from the Prince.]

[It said it helped us again.]

[But it's barbaric.]

Prince was it you!! Though it was me the one who completely forgot to bribe you into silence, don't write such an important thing in a carrier pigeon!! You are a regrettable Prince after all!! It's too regretful!

Perhaps it was immediately issued after we separated? So to say, because he didn't have a pigeon he sent it from the town, and since I stayed for hours at Timo's house, it spread in the castle in the meantime. Such a blunder!

As I noticed this with an 'ufff,' the figure that I detected in front of my eyes came to a standstill.

Her dark blonde ponytail is swaying. I wonder if she came running here in order to find me, she approaches me slowly while gasping for breath, looking at me with a puzzled expression.

— She is, Ariade.

She's not accompanied by Chiffon who is always with her, however, just by looking at her face I confirmed that the rumor has reached her ears. She's staring at me completely as if she's looking at a stranger. In her eyes, there's only a little bit of fear included but I noticed it.

Cold sweat comes out from my whole body; my hands tremble.

Without any preparation the secret I didn't want to let my closest friends know of was disclosed, and with sort of the worst of timings I met with Ariade, who is involved with my Dragon self in no small scale.

"...Vito"

Her low voice echoes.

After all, I shouldn't have come back to the castle.

If I had departed just like that, such a thing would not have happened. I wonder in what manner was Ariade told that I am a Dragon. Yet, I did not witness it. I can't just stand here dumbfounded and trembling like this, without being able to say what I want to say.

"That, ...rumor" (Ariade)

Not wanting to hear anymore, I ran away from there by turning my heels, as if fleeing.

Was I too naïve to think that I could have made the Prince keep silent about this and then continue my life at the castle like always? Without even being able of returning to the room, I ran away from the castle, because I was unable to endure the surrounding inquisitive gazes, and more than anything, Ariade's eyes.

Towards where.

It's obvious that it was towards Vizannu Mountains.

One, DREAM.

"If you were to become an existence you are not, burdened with a unbelievable mission, what would you do?"

"What's with that, is it big brother's delusions again? It's because you're like that, that no matter how much time passes you'll never get a girlfriend."

“How rude to say it’s a delusion. Listen up, please answer me seriously. Also this is unrelated to me not having a girlfriend.”

“I won’t know unless I become like that. But, I think I’d flee.”

“You’d run away?”

” ‘Cause I’d become someone who is not me, right? I’d become scared and flee. And also I do not want to be burdened by a mission or the like. I don’t want to involve in my own life things that are unrelated to me.”

“That answer is typical of you. But, what would you do if you had to take on that mission in order to save someone precious to you? I mean someone who is not a relative.”

“... Such a person, it’s impossible for me.”

“Why? To get close to someone to that extent, won’t you know unless you try? You are in the habit of giving up right away and leisurely running away, don’t you.”

“I’m sorry for just shutting myself away in my shell.”

“I’m not saying that’s wrong. The best defensive action of protecting yourself first is something selfish. You are just too strong in a slightly bad way. You are in the habit of brooding too much about the things that aren’t really necessary to think about.”

“Yes, maybe. But personalities are things that can’t actually be changed.”

“Yeah. It’s fine even then. But remember this, if *** happens, we will be there for you!!”

(T/N: *** meaning 'anything/something/whatever', I guess xD)

"... Brother, you're kind of weird. You're not talking about your delusions as before, and you're saying serious things for the first time in a long time if I think about it. And it's better if you don't sing like an opera singer towards the end. You are a nuisance to the neighborhood. I'll receive your feelings only. Thank you."

"Oh, did you fall in love with me?"

"Like I would."

"It's fine to do so! Oh, my beloved little sister!"

"**! I'll make you into my enemy!" (T/N: the ** in this case is a curse word, Meguesses xD a reader also guesses it could be the oniichan's name.)

"Eh, don't wanna."

I was in the inner part of my usual cave, hugging my knees with my head lowered. I don't remember how much time has passed. However, since I remember the light of the sun having climbed up, a night should have passed.

It's obvious that I've been thinking.

It would have been better had I not stopped at the castle in search of peace, and had just flown away somewhere.

[But she eats humans? I'm afraid.]

I guess that's scary. I get scared of myself as well sometimes.

[So the truth is she's a monster?]

What's wrong with me being a monster. What's wrong with monsters.

[The country will be at peace with this.]

[So the contractor was real?]

That's why, those expectations, I don't want them.

[So it can turn into a Dragon? I want to try seeing that]

Your inquisitive stares, I don't want them.

[How terrifying]

Your fearful stares, I don't want them either.

Don't want them. All of it, I don't want it.

I didn't want to think about how much those gazes hurt, or how the gossip talks pierce through my heart. I hate how they share gossips at their own convenience and liking. I'm in the wrong for behaving like that so I know that I'm reaping what I sowed.

I certainly don't feel regret. — But, honestly, it's painful.

My thinking was surely naïve. I hadn't thought of what would happen after Ariade, or my close friends, learned that I'm a Dragon. No, I was trying not to think about it. I wonder what kind of feelings is Ariade carrying now she knows I'm that Dragon. Betrayed? Deceived?

Only unpleasant things circle round and round within my head.

"I don't want this, anymore."

My voice was hoarse.

I must have a stronger heart in the future. If I don't I surely won't be able to live on from now on. I know that yet I can't gather any strength in my body.

What happened to the might from back then!

But those were complete strangers, not my acquaintances. They weren't people I knew, nor people from the same country as me. So I was able to do things much more clearly, so to say. I'm being feared as a human devouring monster, the Earth Dragon, by the people from the castle, where I've been living all along, which is also the place I belong to. There are also people who arbitrarily decided that the country will be peaceful because of me.

I can't endure that. I do not want to stay in such a place any longer. I just want to live freely without ties. Even though it's just that.

I want to stop being human. Well in the first place I'm not a human. The creatures known as humans are troublesome beings. What is a human? Food. I'm hungry now that I mention it. But going out to eat is annoying. Meat, bones, internal organs, blood. Delicious. I've come to not know what I'm thinking of anymore. I even saw a strange dream. Until now, I hadn't seen that kind of dream. Memories from when I was human were reproduced, but the faces and names of the people could not be confirmed as if they were enclosed in a haze. And the contents are also a faint memory. Are those genuine memories, have I personally experienced that? Oh I don't know anymore. What on earth am I? Why do I eat human beings? Why did I become a dragon? Why am I in this world? Why, do I have the memories of a human from a different world? If I didn't have human memories I wouldn't have descended to a human settlement thus I wouldn't be troubled like this, right? Could I have been suppressed as a human eating dragon? Or it could be possible that I was captured, forced to make a contract and then dragged to war.

I wonder what is the human me..., Well that is, something I can't do anything about even if I think about it. Until now I thought of it many times but I didn't understand anything. Thus I cease thinking about this and, as Timo said to me, I should organize my feelings a little.

But I want to know the answer.

If the world of my human self is my real world, —I want to go back.

“Found you.”

Translator’s Lair:

Yay! half a part here! hmm? what? it’s a horrible place to stop at? yes it iiiis!! but i’m feeling trollish today. did i mention i left the chapter’s best part out? no? ohohohoho. the truth is, i’m still midway to translating that and it had some horrible parts. i may just skip it and post them tomorrow, though. please look forward to that.

Chapter 26 part 2

“Found you.”

Because I was pondering so absorbedly while holding my knees, I didn't notice that someone was approaching at such a close range at all.

Rising my surprised face, the Captain was there.

With his usual figure, with the usual tone of voice, with the usual atmosphere. A big difference with me.

Why is he here. I wonder if he flew here on a Fire Drake, moreover, how in the world did he know the fact that I was here, this place is not supposed to be known by anybody, ...but if I recall correctly, the Captain came here once. Still, how did he connect the fact that I ran away from the castle with this place?

The bright green braided cords were shaking. They became two because I ate one. They look delicious after all, or something. Maybe because I was making such a face, suddenly.

“Do you want to eat?”

I heard such a thing. He crouched down as if to fit in my line of sight while I stared at him with an agape look, did I look like I craved it that much? He offered one of the braided hair cords to me.

Oh, it is that, not his body but that, right? I've eaten that earlier as well.

Was my train of thought becoming strange now? I said, 'If you offer it then I'll take it,' and put only the disheveled tip in my mouth, stuffing my cheeks. I was nibbling on it lightly while just holding it in my mouth and thinking, 'I'll make it sticky with drool!' but as I felt a pleasant something permeate through my body, when I noticed I was wholeheartedly stuffing my cheeks with it. Since I couldn't eat very well I changed my teeth into sharp ones so I could tear it off inside my mouth. It took a considerable amount of time, but I ate one whole. Ah, I'm satisfied. Since being hungry is something akin to being unable to do battle, my feelings also calmed down as I became satisfied. (T/n: unsure again~ 腹が減っては戦は出来ぬと似たようなもので...) Although, in the end the Captain's braid that was born from the right ear became the only one. I'm sorry, but I did not mean to eat it, it was unintentional.

Becoming aware of what I'd done, I glanced at the Captain's face in a hurry to see his reaction, but it's the same as always.

"...Don't you feel disgusted?"

There is no way a girl eating your hair won't make you feel disgusted. If it happened to me, if someone was eating my own hair right then and there, I'd draw back. This sort of thing is as if I was saying in a round about way; 'next, I'll eat you.'

But the Captain shook his head with a curious look.

"Why?"

"Please calm down and consider things again. I'm a girl who becomes a ferocious flesh-

eating Dragon, and I ate not only your left arm, I even ate your hair. Even for the Dragon-loving you, I think this is certainly expected to feel wrong.”

“You were also saying that before.”

That’s why, how come, your reaction is different from theirs.

How can you, accept it so obediently.

“How can you, stay this calm...?”

“I’m not calm.”

“Just how are you not calm...!”

He’s no different than usual. Even his attitude, he has some strange sides but he won’t change from before.

As I had yelled out, the Captain said in a soft voice in order to calm me down.

“After learning that the girl I care about, and the Dragon I admire are the same being, I won’t calm down.”

— The girl you care about?

I became perplexed by the answer that completely missed my estimations and came back to

me as a curve ball.

Does he mean my human self? The time I spent with the Captain is only the period when I was assigned to the dorms.

“...Is it a joke?”

“It’s not a joke.”

The Captain takes my hand, and brings it up to the left side of his chest. Although because of the sudden movement my body fell forward, the beat transmitted from my palm pressed against his left chest felt to me, somehow, like it was beating a bit fast. The vibration was very comfortable; it was telling me, this is proof that he is alive. It was also telling me, I was glad I didn’t eat him that time.

— But, I can’t believe it, such thing.

“Vito, what happened then?”

He asked me, who was hanging my head down, why had I disappeared so suddenly.

Will I be laughed at once I say the reason, or will he be amazed at it. I’m starting to not care whichever way it goes. (T/N: unsure about this one~ どちらしろなんだかもうどうでもよくなっている。)

“...Within the castle, it was known at some point that I’m a Dragon, and it seems like a

variety of rumors are flowing around, so I was a little depressed because of that.”

One can't laugh at something like getting depressed and shutting oneself in.

“I'll let LeBlanche know. I'm sure in that in regards to you, he couldn't remain calm. Besides, perhaps as he shoulders the responsibility of being the Prince of the country, he becomes impatient and loses his cool a little... I'd like you not to attack him, if possible.”

It seems he knew the cause to be the Prince.

Captain, I guess you are skilled at keeping up with me and with the Prince as well. You are an adult, huh. I must come across as a pitiable, childish person, mumbling while troubled like this.

Ah, that's true. Even if he is a Prince, when learning that the “Legendary Earth Dragon” really existed, it's a thing to for the country to rejoice. He wouldn't be able to keep his cool. I'm sorry for having called you a regrettable Prince again, Prince.

Moreover, the reaction of the people at the castle was natural. That's why I'd I'd feel hurt, overwhelmed and troubled over every single thing, there would be no end to it. Didn't Timo also say that it's no use to think about the things that have no answer? And it's merely one or two rumors. It's no good to let such things control my feelings. Let's stop this, already. If my feelings sink the more I think, I'll cease to think about it. Isn't giving up on things actually my forte?

“Understood, it's fine already. And I'm sorry, that you came over to this place for me... I've bothered you.”

“It wasn't a bother, I was worried.”

That's why, I wonder how come you only say such kind things.

Come to think of it, the Captain was delicious, yeah. When I stared at him with such eyes, I heard once again, 'Do you want to eat?' Which part should I eat this time? The last braid? Or his right arm, but replacing it is a hassle. And I must sacrifice a horn. They don't grow up again, these things.

But more than that.

"Captain, you know? You are really delicious. Amongst the humans I've eaten so far, you are the one with the most abundant magical power, I was surprised since it'd almost be a waste to eat you whole. Because it'd be a waste, I ended up thinking of eating you little by little. But... now I don't want to eat you."

During the subjugation instance, I sincerely wanted to eat him, so I helped him with the feelings of not wanting to hand him over to other guys. But, now I do not want to lose him. Because the feeling of wanting him to live is stronger than the feeling of wanting to eat him. Even when confronted with him in my Dragon form, because of these feelings I won't run away.

"It's fine. You should eat when you want to eat."

An immediate OK came my way. Even though I'm talking seriously here.

"It is that, Captain. You said this, didn't you. That you are a Knight that protects the country, in that case, how can you have the leisure to be eaten by me?"

"I did say such a thing."

Somehow talking to him is anticlimactic.

"... I, because I was depressed, I said really terrible things."

"I'm sorry."

"So why are you apologizing, I should be the one apologizing here. So, —I'm sorry."

The arcane! JAPANESE kowtow!! Since I can't do that, I simply bow my head a little. It is true that I've been a bother to the Captain. If I wasn't here he would not have lost his left arm, and his life wouldn't have been in danger twice. These are all, seeds that I've sown. If I wasn't here he may have spent this time more peacefully.

But, I am glad to have met the Captain, from the moment we first met, I have thought so. I think so even now.

To meet someone who stirs my heart this much and makes me behave emotionally, to be able to meet an existence like that, I'm truly delighted. To think such a me exists. My heart is warming up.

The Captain stroked my head once, then held out his hand to me.

"Let's go home."

As I was feeling perplexed I placed my hand on his, and he brought me to my feet. Because I had been sitting all along I couldn't control my steps and almost fell over, but an arm surrounded my hips and supported me from behind.

The Captain was, as usual, smiling gently at me.

I believe it wasn't just my imagination – his heartbeat sped up within his chest.

———
Translator's Lair:

Nghhhhhh!!! Goddamnit so sweeeet!!

Here you have some sweetness before April 1st jokes attack you from everywhere. this chapter was so... I mean, dQQJZBWKZNA. I can't even.

Chapter 27 – part 1

T/N: This part made me want to flip one or several tables >_> this came so out of the blue...

Anyway about the title:

1) 絶賛紅葉中

絶賛 – zessan – high praise, great admiration. 紅葉 – momiji – autumn leaves, fall colors. 中 – chuu – in between, or thorough. Had to point it out because she uses it in the text, then replaces a term in a joke-attempt xD . If you have better suggestions for this expression, after reading the chapter, please point it out~ I went with this: thoroughly of a sensational autumn leaves' hue... so wordy.

2) Rendezvous: A meeting at a prearranged time and place, originating from French. I used rendezvous because that's what's written in the raw: ランデヴー (randevuu), although this isn't a rendezvous per se. The Japanese actually like that word a lot, huh... actually I forgot to point out in the last chapter that when she says: JAPANESE dogeza! (kowitz), she says JAPANESE in katakana (in the English pronunciation). xD it was so funny... uh-huh. Yeah. ... erm, chapter's here:

Chapter 27 – part 1

My cheek is thoroughly of a sensational autumn leaves' hue. Rendezvous with the pink colored her.

I was brought back by the Captain.

For the first time I got to ride a Fire Drake. Honestly, I was scared. I like to fly, but it turned out that I dislike flying while riding on something. I was laughed at because of clinging to the Captain's waist for dear life.

Youu! Why do you have such a thin waist though you're a man! Won't it be fine if you wear a dress and get wooed by a man who doesn't know anything!! (T/N: xD maybe I translated it a bit off, but that's the main point, lol 隊長さんなんかドレス着て何も知らない男に求婚されてしまえばいいんだ！！)

...That's disgusting, as expected.

However a more serious event happened.

It was decided that I'd go to the Dorms for the time being because I couldn't gather the courage to go back to the room, but as soon as we arrived, I received a slap from a lovely girl.

The one in front of me was the Vice-Captain's daughter; facing me with her expression totally red from anger. I had thought of transforming my skin, but then I thought my hard scales would be too painful for a girl's hand, so I received one strike from her palm just like that. Thus one of my cheeks is thoroughly of a sensational autumn leaves' hue. It's the first time that I'm slapped by a girl. I also received a mental shock at being hit, so I became overcome with surprise.

The Vice-Captain also happened to be there, but as he never expected that the daughter he dotes on would have done such a thing, he was as befuddled as I was.

She shouts hysterically.

“I can’t stand you! You are the one they say stole Sir Lance from me, the p, people-eating Dragon!?”

I stole Lance from her?

Although I have too many memories in me about being a flesh-eating dragon, I don’t have any about having snatched Lance from her. In the first place I’m not even dating him –by chance, this is.

“Perhaps, do you like... Sir Lance?”

“Sh-shut up!!”

Her red face became even redder, and it appeared she intended to slap me again so I retreated three steps.

It seems it was bull’s-eye from her reaction. Although her facial expression is that of anger, her eyes are those of a maiden in love.

“There’s nothing going on in between Sir Lance and me.”

“That’s a lie! Because, didn’t you receive a hair ornament from him!”

“... Oh, please rest assured, since that did not have any special meaning. Besides even Chiffon and Madeleine received one.”

I do not know where she got to know this from, but one ought not to make light of this place's information network. And starting from next time I'll be careful when receiving things from men. A woman's jealousy is scary. I've received the thoroughly sensational personal experience just now. (T/N: similar to the title, only, she replaced 'autumn leaves' with 'personal experience.' 体験)

"I won't believe that! Why you... monster, ...that's right!! Monster!! ...You are nothing but a monster that eats people!! You are certainly planning to eat everyone once we become careless, aren't you!?"

Woow, I become quite depressed when faced to that fastball. Previously I was also called a monster several times, but being called that by a lovely girl gives me a different level of depression. But to have those phrases said to me face to face, might be much better than hearing them being told sneakily behind my back. Because I have a way to deal with it.

Yeah. If everyone has things they wish to tell me it will be good if you come tell that to me without speaking secretly. If you do so a solution may come forth. ...But would someone who would like to talk to such a Dragon in that manner exist? (T/N: very wild guess. Also, proof that my grammar is twisted :D・・・なんてドラゴンと話そうなんてもの好きはそういないか。)

"The thing is that you are a disgusting Dragon!! A brutally frightening, --"

"Maribel!!"

It seems her name is Miss Maribel. What a sweetly cute name. ...hey me, it's not the time to be escaping reality.

Apparently there was no chance to jump in and interrupt her threatening attitude, but the Vice-Captain was finally able to do so. Sliding his bulky large build in between us, he is looking down on Maribel.

“F, Father ...?”

With a rather frightening threatening attitude that won't lose to Maribel's, the Vice-Captain, with an expression capable of making an ogre flee barefoot*, says in a menacing and low voice. (T/N: long note at the end.)

“There're things that you should say and things you should not.”

“But...!!”

“Without knowing anything, forcing your own feelings on others is wrong. Try getting to know Miss Vito beforehand if there is something you want to say to her. And Dragons are indispensable existences for this country. I won't forgive you for insulting her even if it's you.”

Talking on and on in one breath, made Miss Maribel become completely quiet. Some tears floated in her large eyes as her small body trembled.

“...I'm sorry.”

Her figure became depressed with a 'dun,' and looked so pitiable, I felt bad since I got the

feeling that it was my fault that he got angry at her. Forcefully squeezing myself in between them in a hurry, I got a little scared because the Vice-Captain glared at me with a flash in his eyes*. No, I was pretty scared. But this was my fault. She is not wrong. (t/n: guessing girami is short for giragira – to glitter strongly)

“Vice-Captain, she is not wrong. It’s wrong that I’m a Dragon that eats people.”

“I’m sorry but, Miss Vito, this is our problem. Will you hold yourself from interjecting?”

“No, she would never be so frightened if I wasn’t here. This is my responsibility.”

Yelling at me in anger was for a misunderstanding as well, and she would have not been scolded by her father either.

I turned around towards Miss Maribel and bowed my head.

“I’m sorry, Miss Maribel. Because I will leave this place eventually, won’t you put up with me until then?”

Miss Maribel bit her tightened lips, and with tears floating in her eyes she sent me a glare, faced me with her back and left the room. Watching her form from behind, the Vice-Captain heaves a small sigh.

“...I’m truly sorry.”

“I don’t mind it, really.”

I really care about her real motives. It was of course because she learned that for humans, I'm a monster. When I'm being called 'monster, monster' like this my feelings become numb, and I start thinking 'isn't it fine even if I'm a monster?' And it's sad, but it's obvious that there are people like Miss Maribel. Rather than that I believe that is the correct reaction to have as a human being. Although the Earth Dragon is said to be this country's Holy Beast, the last time it was confirmed it existed was more or less a hundred years ago. In truth there would be a lot of people who would doubt that such a being exist and would help this country. In its own way that's convenient for me, but it gives me somewhat mixed feelings.

Maybe because I was letting out my depressed mood, the Vice-Captain apologized again.

"Please do not apologize. Because, it's all my bad."

"...Actually Maribel's true feelings are that she doesn't hate Dragons."

No way. She seemed to dislike Dragons from her attitude toward me.

"In the past, her relationship with Reina was so good that they would play together. But one day they suddenly stopped playing together. Rather, she stopped approaching dragons themselves at some point. ... I think it was then that I learned she didn't play with Dragons anymore. Because despite the appearances, she is very sensitive to her surroundings." (t/n: Reina = VC's Fire Drake, if my frail memory doesn't fail me. Also, this all was a pain in the asteroid. . . .

きっと同じ年頃の娘がドラゴンと遊ばないのを知ったんだろう。)

"Is that so...?"

How unexpected. But since her father the Vice-Captain says it, there's probably no doubt.

Did it mean Miss Maribel might have been misunderstood. She doesn't often show a good face to Ariade or Madeleine, and I also couldn't think of my first impression of her as a good one. But if the reason was because her heart is delicate and easily hurt, and she is deliberately taking a domineering attitude in order to protect herself, it is almost not paying off.

The Vice-Captain said, 'I'll return after talking to her,' and left the room after her.

Translator's Lair:

The author has spoiled us too much with fluffy things ;n; so this was unexpected. thankfully the table-flipping-inducing mood is over. next up: edo period law announcement notes, bumps into the wall and some other scaly things.

To run away barefoot: 裸足で逃げだす: it's an expression I didn't understand.

From weblio: (<http://www.weblio.jp/content/裸足で逃げる>)

その道の専門家でさえ、とてもかなわないと見て、あわててはだして逃げ出す。非常にすぐれていることのたとえ。i think it means: 'even the experts in a field will run away barefoot and in a panic when they see things are too out of reach. To be surpassed by a large margin.'

In short... to surpass an expert in a field and make them flee in a panic? Well, that was implied...I mean, If his face was scary enough to scare an oni away... you can read in between that his face was uglier than the oni's. Maybe the 'barefoot' may come from 'they didn't take the time to put on their shoes and just run away as is,' but that's just my guess. まあ、もういいか。The meaning is clear any way even if I don't include the barefoot part... yay for researching useless stuff!! :D

Chapter 27 – part 2

I will end translating this novel into English with this :3 for the reason, please read this post if you still haven't. I'm still pondering whether I'll continue translating only this series into Spanish, or to make several teasers of many series in spanish, in order to promote the translation of light and web novels into other languages... anyway!, about the chapter!:

T/N: I managed to find a cute pic of Maribel/Maribelle~ there you have it.

a, and, i-i... I wasn't expecting that flag!!! I'm not seeing things, right?! It is that, right?! Also, I'm sowwy, buth me failsh at onomatopoeiash ;n;

Warning: two walls ahead. One is real, the other is dense.

Chapter 27 – part 2

Now that I think of it the Captain was here as well. It seems he was considerably surprised at Miss Maribel's attitude; I wonder if because of that he didn't grasp the timing to cut into the talk.

The Captain gently stroked my reddened cheek. Although it reddened it is not that painful. I wonder if he's worried about me.

"Are you all right?"

"I am fine. But, I'm worried about her."

When I said that, I heard a rare small sigh coming from him.

“Vito, you blame yourself too much.”

“... What does that mean?”

“Anything and everything, you take it into you own thinking and suffer because of it. You shoulder responsibilities you shouldn’t shoulder. And the worst is, that you think too much. There’s always a wrinkle forming here.”

He presses down on the middle of my forehead with his index finger, in between my eyebrows.

“...I didn’t notice. Do you mean, I always do it?”

“Whenever you are thinking. So I can tell immediately if you are troubled over something.”

That’s embarrassing. Could it be, it was also discovered that every morning I thought ‘he looks so delicious, riiight?’ while staring at him? I didn’t know that I had such a habit.

“Yes but. Miss Maribel’s misunderstanding was caused by actions I took myself.”

“Yeah. But try thinking of it, she used violence against you, who are the Holy Beast of the country. It wouldn’t be strange for her to receive a suitable punishment for this.”

I really didn’t think that such words would ever come out from the Captain’s mouth; something cold run down my spine.

The fact of hurting the country's Holy Beast, I wonder if there's a need to apply a punishment to such an extent. What's with such an 'animal protection law'. (T/N: see note at the end). Too scary. I don't think the people who have hurt me have committed any sin, nor have I thought of punishing them. I am myself.

Besides, why did the captain say such a thing? So far the Captain hadn't said such things not even once, in the end, it seems my expectations of the Captain were too high —

As I showed for a single moment some wariness towards him, I heard a voice filled with a bitter laugh.

"It's a joke. We won't do that."

— What's with that. As in being unable to see the forest for the trees, while I was pondering on what to do if he was on the Prince's side, I ended up thinking a lot of things in only a few seconds. I think I certainly turned pale as I broke into a cold sweat with an earth shattering force. I got into a really startled mood.

Please quit being mischievous. We have enough with Lord Cleric already. My life span will reduce.

"But, please keep in mind that for this country, you have that much worth. Because not everyone's thinking is like mine."

He looks like he is not thinking at all, but he's thinking more than others. As if he isn't even

staring at the other person, he's looking at them properly. He's even good at backing you up. When giving advice, he is clever and compelling. It's quite late at this time, but I can agree with him being the Fourth Knight Corps Captain.

"So cherish yourself more."

—Wait a minute. I can't give in here.

"That's what I want to say. How do you plan on living while facing danger countless times, and of those times how often did you think I saved you? And you, Captain, please don't say something like 'it's fine to eat me' so lightly, ...please cherish yourself."

Yeah. He even he got hurt by shielding the Prince, it's you whom should cherish yourself!

He directed a big happy smile at me when I said that.

And, that smile crumbled in an instant.

"Also, I won't forgive you for saying you will leave."

"Yes?"

Though it could be said a warm and fuzzy mood was drifting around, I let out a messy voice as his facial expression changed in an instant.

When the Captain lifts up his bangs, his black eyes which hidden underneath appear. It's the

second time he exposes those eyes himself. At that time had said that they are not really liked by others, but I wonder if he doesn't feel resistance to exposing them himself anymore.

"C-Captain ...?"

I feel happy by staring at my beloved black.* I'd like to stare at it forever. But, I feel like strangely his pupils are really still, staring fixedly at me**. Puzzled at Captain's unusual atmosphere, involuntarily I stepped back one, two steps. Yet, to match that, he approached one, two steps. (T/N: two long notes at the end)

— What, what's with that! What are you trying to do! Why are you coming closer! Are you coming closer because I'm escaping!? Rightwellthen I'll stop, but he didn't stop walking. As he approached slowly, eventually I was left with no path for escaping as I retreated until I reached a wall. I ended up with my back against the wall. Unlike my back, the back of my head bumped severely into it so I was moaning in pain in my mind, yet at some point he has imperceptibly contracted the distance; soon the Captain's face has approached to such an extent, that he was able to whisper in a low voice next to my ear.

"I said, 'I want you.'"

With a 'shann,' something ran all over my body. It wasn't something cold, but neither something warm. It's a strange feeling like my feet are not attached to the floor. My heart reverberates as if it could explode.

Such a thing, it did happen. Certainly it was at the time that I ate his left arm. But immediately after that I completely forgot about it. I began to remember now. Don't star remembering now!

I had my head down, and he uses his palm to caress my single red cheek from the slap, but then lowers his hand to grab my chin, and with an undetectable strength he makes me face upwards. It hurt my neck a little.

His eyes are really still. Like a doll's, they're scary.

What's wrong, me. The other person is the Captain! He should have no components to be scared of!

Yet, somehow, something's different from usual, and I feel really uncomfortable.

"Wh, what does that mean?"

"...don't know."

So you don't know?

All right, let's turn this into an opportunity. By being pushed around like this my reputation as a Dragon becomes obsolete!

"It, it's because the Captain is brimming with curiosity. You like the unrivaled Dragons, right? Surely, it's only because me being the Earth Dragon is unusual. It's only that. So that's why—"

"The one to decide that is me. Not you."

Being told that so flatly and clearly I shut my mouth.

— Well then what is it? For the Captain, what kind of existence am I?

...I believe that he feels that I'm something like a Mr. Goggle-eyed Goby. That's why he also became excited for skinship. Because I'm not human but an animal. Even myself, if there was a lovely rabbit I'd cuddle it. (t/n: it says 'I'd do mofumofu'... where mofumofu means fluffy xD so I'm guessing~). If there was a delicate wolf then I'd hug it and pat it with abandon. It's because I like animals. But I can't do that if the other party is human.

Only to pets.

Ugh, I get depressed the more I think about it. I'm glad that I'm being loved, but I'm an animal after all. Different from human beings.

Somehow the surroundings have become noisy, huh. That the castle is bustling with noise, the thing with Miss Maribel, the thing with Captain, ...and the matter with Ariade. I even think that, if by me being here, the gears have ended up getting of place, wouldn't have been better if I hadn't come here so eagerly?

Little by little, something is getting out of place.

It is probably my fault.

Well I'm sure, it's my fault.

...to be thinking such things, I wonder if the Captain would say that it is useless.

“It’s useless.”

Eh, so it’s useless after all.

“Huh?”

“That’s why, it is useless to worry so much.”

Was I speaking out loud? The Captain’s angry appearance is peeking into my pupils as I frown. Close enough to make one sigh. My full field of vision is permeated by black, and the strength of my stiff shoulders disperses like the raging waves within my heart becoming calm. I wonder, when did I become so dependent on the color black? Black that could be said to be alive is so fascinating that it makes my heart at ease.

— Oh, now that I think of it, I wonder if Rau was more fascinating because his body was pitch-black?

“Just now, who were you thinking of?”

As I was remembering about Lau, I was surprised because suddenly the Captain’s face came even closer. Wait, this is dangerous. This is dangerous for the cardiac muscle. (T/N: she says the organ of the heart...) Somehow the Captain is odd today. He’s always odd, but the pressure is much stronger today.

“Wh, what are you talking about?”

“I’m right here, but you thought of someone else.”

“Eh, it is that so?”

I was thinking of one large crow. It will admit it. But how does he know that!?

“Who?”

“...Thought just briefly of a friend.”

“Someone important?”

“Yes, it’s important. Yet we can’t meet, because he is on a journey to the south now.”

“I see.”

What is this. Isn’t this a conversation such as the husband interrogating his wife who was discovered of having an affair! But I’m not having an affair and in the first place I’m not married and am a girl who has not experienced romance. I don’t understand the reason for being confronted like this.

With that the Captain fell silent, he’s simply staring at me from above with an unreadable expression.

I’m at my limit already. I can’t stand his stare.

Someone, save me please.

After that I wrapped up things by saying something, and saw off the Captain as if we were coming out of a conference. For him to return from that attitude to his usual manner, just how much did he trouble me! (t/n: just a wild guess~あの姿勢から普通の立ち姿勢に戻るまでどんなに苦労したことか！)

While I was lost in thought someone knocked on the door, so I said 'Come in,' but was surprised because the one to come in was Maribel, who had excited the room earlier.

"...I wonder, do you have some time now?"

Did she cry? The area around her eyes is red and a little swollen. When she walks till in front of me, her mouth opens and closes like she really wants to say something, while her pupils swim left and right.

And when she made her decision, she opened her mouth to capture me who was suitably in front of her. (t/n: not sure either~ xD 真正面似私を捕えると口を開いた)

"About before, ...uhm, ...I'm sorry."

I blink my eyes. Honestly it's anticlimactic because I had taken a defensive stance as I

thought she would complain again.

“It’s me the one who is sorry for causing you trouble.”

“F, father told me to come apologize so that’s why I came here! D, don’t be mistaken!”

A tsundere, was it?

It’s the first time I see such a pure tsundere type. I’m impressed. Yet, it’s not the timing to be thinking such things.

She finally came to meet me, it is rude not to listen properly to what she wants to say.

“...I was told to do so by father. You may eat humans, but when thinking about it, you saved father and the rest twice. If it were not for you, they surely...”

They’d surely be dead. But that’s something I’ve said many times to be something I sowed myself.

“There is no need to mention that. The cause of the subjugation affair was originally because I used to dwell on that mountain, and the messenger’s affair, if there were no rumors about the contract and the like, the need to send out even the Vice-Captain would not have existed.”

“Th, that’s right but”

“... That’s why I don’t feel the need for you to express your gratitude.”

When I said that, Miss Maribel glares at me while clenching both hands into fists and a trembling body. I was preparing myself while wondering what sort of complain she'll issue now, but I was wrong.

"Why are you so humble!? The cause of things or whatever, you saved my most important person! Is that not enough!? That's why I want to thank you!!"

Surprised by her sudden outburst I was left unable to say anything, simply staring at her. Different from her threatening attitude from earlier, her desperation comes through in her own style.

"Even the scent bag, thanks to that it became easier to work! I also give you my thanks for that!! My head was too confused before, I'm also reflecting on it!! Since I'm saying all this, accept it properly!!"

"Eh, uhm... ok?"

I nodded as I lost to her momentum. Miss Maribel's face is bright red and she was left out of breath.

And when I came back to my senses and noticed what I had just said, she fires in rapid succession, 'Don't, don't get the wrong idea!' with her red-apple-like face becoming even redder.

— Somehow, how cuuute.

"Hey, what are you laughing at!"

She's frantically fanning her burning cheeks with her hand in order to cool them down. That behavior is also lovely and makes one smile.

"No, it's nothing."

In the end Miss Maribel is a good girl at heart. She just dislikes to convey her true feelings, and thus she takes on a very domineering attitude, doesn't she? Taking that into consideration somehow I get the feeling we could get along well.

"Hey, about Sir Lance... was that true?"

As I answer with a 'I'm telling you there's nothing', she makes a relieved faces as she heaves a sigh.

"...Then it's alright."

"I also apologize for causing that misunderstanding."

From now on I'll be careful when receiving things from a man. A woman's jealousy is scary. Unable to let off the ones said to be their rivals, girls in love can become this desperate, huh. For Chiffon, I'm envious of her male counterpart. Especially for Lance, who is liked by Miss Maribel, I feel too envious. In fact, those two don't suit each other, right? (t/n: what's with this... xD wild guesses again. シフォンしかり、相手の男の人が羨ましい。特にマリベルさんに好かれているランスさんが羨ましすぎる。2人って実はお似合いなんじゃないだろうか。)

"... Please stop it, speaking so politely." (t/n: not calling her miss/-san and stop speaking in keigo, polite speech you use with people you may be somewhat distant with or your

superiors or blahblahblah.)

“What? Oh, ...okay?”

‘That’s fine,’ she says. And nods in a satisfied-like manner.

“And, it was determined that you will be staying in my room for a while.”

“Eeh?”

“No way, you were thinking of returning to your previous room? Do you know what kinds of rumors are being told of you?”

Gyaa. I forgot.

“By all means, please. I ask for you to let me stay at your place.” (t/n: I fail at polite speech in english)

“That’s why, quit it with the polite speech!”

“Sorry, sorry”

“That’s why, why are you laughing!!”

Maribel’s room is in the castle, close by to the Dorms, and was lovely enough to make you say, ‘she’s a young girl, huuh.’ It has a canopy bed, the curtains have plenty of frills, and

likewise the closet and dresser are cutely decorated.

And it seems we'll sleep together in the bed that has enough room to fit four people. I had said that I'm fine with sleeping on the floor, but while she said something along the lines of 'that bad for one's beauty!' I ended up being dragged to the bed.

Somehow I'm nervous. Since I haven't slept in the same bed with someone else before, I can't sleep as if this was totally a night during a field trip.

By the way since my sleep-wear was left in my previous room, I'm borrowing some. Maribel unties her peach-colored hair, and changes into a pretty pink negligee. Are you the princess from some place! She's so cute it troubles me. If I were a man I might have signed up for a relationship aiming for an instant marriage. And a pink negligee is also what I'm wearing myself. Is has less frills compared to Maribel's and is simpler than hers, but I hadn't thought that the day would come where I'd wear pink clothes. It doesn't suit me at all, but she went through the trouble of preparing it for me so I wore it. But I was feeling insecure so it was decided that I'd borrow and wear a nightgown of a more somber shade.

"Hey, have you really not entered a contract with anyone?"

"I haven't. Why?"

Maribel had slipped into bed, and her big eyes are shining brilliantly. Is this the launching of a girl's talk that young girls like so much?

"Because isn't it romantic? An interspecies relationship between a human and a Dragon. The former contractors also remained married for life, and what's more it's said that their

descendants exist somewhere in this continent.” (t/n: I told you an interspecies romance is a must in a fantasy setting a few chapters back, Vito!)

It was the first time I heard there being descendants. Ohh, so a human and a Dragon can have children. Didn't know. (t/n: she says 初耳, but that's redundant in English here.)

At any rate, it's very girly to think that such a thing is romantic, right? But what's happening to me is, rather than actual romantic things, always belongs into the splatter-grotesque classification. But if I said that to Maribel it'd knock her down so I didn't say it. In the first place I wonder if she remembers the fact that I am a flesh-eating Dragon. Somehow she has been relating with me normally since then, and in a sense I'm happy about it but I wonder what is going on inside her.

“Well then, are there any humans you want to contract with?”

Why did it come to this? Hey, you are asking this in the same outline as if fellow girls were asking each other about the people they like. I'm no good at getting into love talks like these. I had plenty of bad experiences with Madeleine and the girls. Since following her lead like this caused the conversation to turn into something bothersome, I decided to change the topic. I thought about swinging the conversation into talking about Lance, but I suddenly became worried about what the Vice-Captain had said so I decided to ask about it.

“Come to think of it I heard from the Vice-Captain about Reina ...”

With a 'shun,' Maribel's face becomes dim.

“...I love Reina even now. But a girl that goes and meets with Dragons, is not normal, is she? I thought that if I work at this Dorm, I may be able to meet Reina. ... But I haven't met her yet, actually.”

What. Then the talk will be brief.

“Then, let’s go. Because I will come with you.”

“Huh?”

“It’s okay. I can enter freely because they know me, but would it be weird if I, as a Dragon, go visit the Dragons’ Building?” (t/n: 顔パス, kao PASU, a ‘face pass,’ means free admission for being well known xD)

Maribel was staring at me in puzzlement, but then she laughs and says, ‘That’s true.’

“But you, you are not like a Dragon at all, hmph.”

I see. I am not Dragon-like? If that’s so then she can speak normally to her and she nods.

“I’ll take it as a compliment.”

Even so, usually there aren’t girls that will go meet a Dragon. I guess that I was drifting away from reality before. (t/n: to float/浮く= can mean to ‘drift away from reality’. Weblio, meaning 9.)

Well that’s why Stefanos was so surprised at me.

Translators’s Lair:

...no cliff here! And Maribel did a real 180° turn in this chapter, lol. The tsun is strong in this one. And...

...Captain... that was a yandere flag, right? The captain looked like an herbivore, with his braids and his green hair and that spacey air about him, but he was a carnivore all along, wasn't he?! And he went and became jealous at a crow!! So sharp!! He can probably read Vito like a book by now xD no, like a neon sign. By the way, he speaks with the minimum amount of words required to be understood, always. I often had to make what he says more wordy in order for it to make sense in English, otherwise he'd come across to you like a green haired tarzan. Now, the real Translator's notes xD :

'The law to show consideration for the living beings' –wikipedia: part of the many proclamations made during the Genroku part of the Edo period. 'To show consideration for the living beings' was the general term by which as many as 135 proclamations forbidding killing were known. The reason 135 proclamations had to be made was because they weren't being carried out. (Hah, forbidding killing in Middle Ages' Japan... yeah.) During 24 years only 69 punishments were enacted. As it encompassed dogs, cats, birds, fishes, shellfishes, and bugs and insects (it wasn't restricted only to dogs, but encompassed all living beings, aiming for the compassion in people's hearts as a matter of vital importance), it was known as 'The Ruling Power's Bad Law.' And I'm not gonna translate further xD I made it into: animal protection law to maintain the flow of the story somewhat... and sort of to keep it into a slight joke xD Wikipedia, why oh why u haven't tl'ed this to English, temee!! Even though so many useless pages have been tl'ed already ;n;

恋焦がれる黒 – **Koigareru kuro**: the koigareru again... except, this time the context made it easy to understand what she's referring to! So I'll go and update the previous translation, too. Basically, while koigareru iro or koigareru kuro (kuro = black) might be translated literally by 'lovestruck color', she actually meant 'the color I'm lovestruck with.' ...to think this gave me so many headaches and it was just so simple... ">.> I can't even.

瞳が据わって – **hitomi ga suwaru**: 'the pupils sit.' What's with that. anyway, Goo dictionary says: 'When angry or drunk, to stare fixedly at one spot.' ...am I the only one imagining a drunk Captain staring at Vito at close range, fixedly, while she panics like hell? Ufufufufufufu...

On another note, the Japanese also say, when someone is moving their eyes back and forth, that their pupils are swimming... in case you see this around somewhere else (remembered this because Maribel was doing that with her eyes.) I learned this when reading a manga, where a character's pupils were a mini version of herself literally swimming left and right as a joke xD who was it who said u don't learn anything when reading manga? Who was it?

And this is all from me for a while :3 I'll go read some other novels ohohohohoh. Who needs beauty sleep anyway? xD have a nice night!

~Ninish.

Chapter 28 – part 1

T/N: warning! purring dragon ahead. purring kitties are now outdated.

Chapter 28 – part 1

Thank you, is the only thing I won't say.

The next day, we decided to head towards the Dragon Building during Maribelle's lunch break.

By the way, was I that tired? I slept until noon. Because of my original job as well as the state of the current circumstances, it was a while since I slept this soundly; it is refreshing to be able to face not the sunrise but noon, how relieving. I heard that every creature has different sleeping times. The fact that that emperor, Napoleon, slept 3 hours a day, compared to the prominent Einstein with his Theory of Relativity who slept 10 hours a day, is a famous story.

I guess I'm closer to Einstein, huh. I long for the life of a Dragon indulging in inactivity.

"Hold on a little!"

As I'm leaving behind Maribelle, whose feet barely advance in our way towards the Dragon Building, suddenly she runs over and stops me by getting a hold of my arm.

Her upturned eyes are cute.

"We are doing this stealthily but you are standing out. See now, don't you want to meet with Reina quickly?"

"Well that's true but..."

"Then let's go."

Confirming that Maribelle is reluctantly following after me, I start walking again.

The guard who is near the entrance goes pale as soon as he sees my face. Surely they are being scrupulous of the rumors even over here. We weren't friendly enough with each other to exchange greetings upon meeting, but it's lonely that he shows me that kind of attitude so openly. Furthermore, he cowered even more at being glared at by Maribelle.

"Maribelle..."

"I hate people who get controled by rumors all around."

"Are you in the place to be saying that?"

"...You are so noisy."

But, thank you. When I say so Maribelle turns away, as if embarrassed. Truly, she's a honest person, yet somehow not honest at all. (1)

We were arriving to the small room of the Dragon we intended to meet, but she was standing still in place, has she not made her decision yet? However, a brief moment later she stepped forward as if her heart made a choice.

When looking into the small room, Reina was lying sprawled in the ground and staring in our direction.

"Reina ...?"

Her whisper in a small voice seems to have reached Reina's ears, as she raised the neck that had been lowered to gaze at Maribelle.

"It's me, it's Maribelle. Though it's posible you don't remember because it's been too many years already. ...We used to play together, I wonder if you remember?"

My hearts is pounding as I watch on.

It had been watching her attentively for a while, but Reina did not show any reaction. I wonder if she did not remember in the end. Discouraged, Maribelle hid her face. (2)

"Is that so, There's no way you would—"

[Maribelle, Maribelle, so long, glad.]

Reina's face came closer and she nuzzled her cheek against Maribelle's, and she rang her throat with a krrr krrr.

Apparently she does remember somehow. She might have been a little perplexed since it was said that they haven't met for several years. The last time they met she had the figure of a little girl, and it seems it has been a long time since they met like that. (3) Watching her rubbing her cheek happily, even I get in a happy mood.

"Re, Reina?"

"It seems Reina does remember Maribelle."

"You can tell?"

"Because I'm a Dragon."

"Now that you say so, that's right."

I think so, but as expected I'm not very Dragon-like, am I?

Maribelle is also happily patting and hugging Reina's head. Surely if Stefanos sees this, he will say, 'This's the 3rd woman I see who's not afraid when seeing a Dragon!' (4), I guess, or something like that. That reminds me, why was it that Maribelle wanted to work in the Fourth Knight Corps dormitory? Was it because her father the Vice-Captain is there after all? Or because she wanted to stay a little closer to the person she likes? Or because she wanted to meet Reina? Or perhaps... it was all of them. I can't help but think so when looking at Maribelle now, right in front of me. She has a high pride and has a side which is hard to approach, but I think she's actually a really kind girl.

She also has a side which is at the mercy of rumors, I have a feeling that that is similar to me. So I wonder if that's why such a sense of intimacy sprung forth.

"Reina, I'm sorry for stopping to visit so suddenly. From now on I'll come to see you! Together with Vito as well!"

"Eh, me too?"

"That's obvious! It'll be suspicious if a girl enters the Dragon Building alone."

...Was the previous me suspicious, I wonder. I came here quite often.

"Your answer is?"

"Oh-kay."

Saying, 'don't give me such a dispirited answer,' she got angry at me.

"We'll come again, alright?"

[Glad]

Maribelle kisses Reina's cheek. It's embarrassing to watch, but I feel envious. (5) This the bond between a human and a dragon, is it? It's gentler and deeper than I thought, though you may cut it, it won't be cut off so easily. (6)

Translator's Lair~

(1) The Tsun-gene is perfected in this one.

(2) Maribelle hid her face. -With her hands, I assume. 落胆してマリベルは顔を伏せてしまった。

(3) The whole sentence is a Wild Guess~ :D 最後に会ったの?は小さな女の子の姿だし、当時のマリベルと一致するまで時間がかかったようだ。

(4) I'm bad at adapting Stefanos' way of speaking ._.||| ドラゴンを見て驚かない女を見たのは3人目だぜ <- he always adds 'da ze' at the end of his sentences. go to hell, da ze, Stefanos. i'll replace that 'da ze' for an exclamation sign for the mean-permanently-time. :3 sorry if the sentence didn't come out as funny as it was supposed to be... not that it was THAT funny.

(5) Vito, stop walking down that path. bishies are the law. in the off-chance multiple bishies can't be acquired, at least choose Captain. He is The Supreme Law, I tell you.

(6) A Wild Guess appeared! 切ってもなかなか切れるようなものではないんだろう。

There's like, 3/5 of the chapter pending. i said i'd give an update today, so here it goes! i blame Jon Snow and my babysitting my nephews for the lack of progress. I did try to get more out, but heck, kid movies are so addictive you can't just stop watching them. damn. #mybloodismadeofprocrastination

No promises on when i'll get the next part out, but it will be on sunday at it latest :3

Chapter 28 – part 2

As we left Reina's small room and intended to return to the dorm, familiar figures could be seen near the entrance.

At that moment, being reminded of what happened the other day made a shiver run down my back.

The tall owner of a dark blond ponytail; the owner of the marshmallow melons. Though I think it can be questioned to make a judgment based on breasts, there is no mistake. When they noticed me, they walked over to meet us midway.

"Vito, chan?"

"..."

It's Chiffon, and Ariade. It seems to me that they are confused to see me and Maribel together. Their faces are becoming stiff. No, actually I wonder if there are other reasons.

Like the thing with the rumor, or that they are nervous to be around the Dragon Building which is filled with Dragons, or various things.

"Uhm, we heard Vito-chan was here." (Chiffon)(1)

"Vito, this is about the rumor but, ... Is it true?" (Ariade)

Compared to Chiffon, what I heard from Ariade was a straight ball. I like that in her. But, it's not a ball with a change of speed, it's too straight so it left me mumbling. (2) It was a voice lower and softer than usual. And the atmosphere as if speaking with someone you meet for the first time it made me feel like running away. I said I was resting because I was feeling ill, yet I ended up disappearing just like that so I caused the both of them a lot of trouble. And the friends with whom I get along the best at the castle are Chiffon and Ariade. About the rumor, I think they were probably told something by a coworker. Thinking that, I feel that what I did to them is very inexcusable.

Particularly to Ariade, I ended up doing something very rude when I suddenly escaped. I'm, making the preparations to be yelled at.

"...I'm sorry to have kept silent."

At my apology the two people lower their gazes.

I do not know what to do. Originally I wasn't planning to stay in the castle, so regarding them I was thinking 'if it's just this much,' while resigning myself (3). Because I thought it'd be rejected when they learned the truth. Because I was afraid that if that happened, I'd be confronted head on, and I wouldn't be able to stand it. (4) So at that time, I ran away. But, it was thus made that I'd remain in the castle, so I should have made preparations for when we ended up meeting again. It was inevitable. But, I do not know what to do to. If I apologize, would that be fine? Or should I behave defiantly?

Maybe she grew impatient because we continued to stay silent, but Maribelle grabbed my arms, and hugging me to her chest, she dragged me away. Her arms have the making to be a boyfriend's arms (5). By being pulled so suddenly I almost fell, but somehow I managed to steady my feet, and we briskly begin walking in a in a fast pace. When Ariade blocks our way in front, Maribelle raises the end of an eyebrow and makes a challenging expression. It's the same domineering attitude she made when I first met her.

"You guys, what's your business here? If you have no other businesses then please leave. You are a hindrance."

"Maribelle, I" (Vito)

"It's fine, right? Lunch break is about to end, so let's go to eat to Nassau's place quickly."

Mr. Nassau!! I want to eat! I want to eat his cooking by all means but...!!

It seems I'm losing to my appetite, but right now is not the timing to be thinking such a thing.

"Wait a moment please. We have an issue to discuss with Vito, won't you please not take her away as you please?"

Ariade's cold gaze is directed to Maribelle.

"You guys have no business here. More over what are you to Vito?"

"How about you, what are you to her."

"What am... I'm, I'm her friend!"

"Oh really now. We're her close friends, and we also have been so from waaay before you. And what's more Chiffon and I are even her roommates."

"And so what! Because we're sleeping together in the same bed!"

"Wha, ...I, I've chosen clothes for her! And she looked very cute in them! It's a shame you couldn't see her!"

"That loses to Vito wearing my frilly negligee!!"

"I, I wanted to see that... that's not it, —!!"

"Ugh... even I one day—!!"

Stop iiiit don't fight over meee!! ...I had wanted to say this at least once. Or perhaps I should say I wanted to be born a man, huh, if I had the current situation would be a harem. (6) ...It isn't the time to be joking? Sorry. I wanted to escape from the current reality in front of my eyes. 'Cause I'm scared, too scared. Now I understand the feelings of the men of action. (7) What you're saying makes me happy and embarrassed, but please don't say it out loud. ... Somehow I don't like this. Though I do not want to see my friends fight because of me, since I'm afraid of these people who are shouting to each other by no means could I jump in to stop them. (8)

I heaved a small sigh, yet when I thought I heard the sound of a running nose nearby so I looked towards Chiffon's figure, I was startled.

"Wait, calm down the both of you, Chiffon is crying."

I wonder if their threatening attitude and yelling made her scared. As I hurriedly approach her in a panic, she says even while letting sobs out.

"...Don't, fiiiight ...Vi, Vito-chan suddenly went missing, and the rumors that are going around say that she's a dragon or something, I don't know what to do anymore..."(9)

"Chiffon, don't cry."

Although my chest tightened at those words, I take out a handkerchief from my pocket and wipe the messy tears that overflow from her honey colored pupils.

"Uu, ee, Vito-chaan" (t/n: crying sfx xD)

"Look here, you should blow your nose."

Zupi—.

“Thank, yoou.”

Oops, I have no more handkerchiefs. As I was in a panic by not having something to wipe the tears still flowing in a mess, a pale colored handkerchief presses softly onto the area around Chiffon’s eyes.

“...I’m sorry, I flew in a rage for a little bit. Forgive me.”

“U, uuuhh...”

This time Ariade was wiping the tears and blowing her nose. She looks like a mother from here. She’s the same as always, very caring.

The tears stopped after a while, and somehow because of that the two stopped glaring at each other, that was helpful.

Did she calm down? Ariade who recovered her cool turned to me with a slightly sad expression.

“I just wanted to know, whether the rumor is true. So I came to meet you. That you are... that, a Dragon, I can’t believe it, but if it were true... honestly, I’d be scared.”

Is that so. Who would think that the person whom so far they thought to be their friend would turn out to be a Dragon who eats humans? It’s not very believable, but now in front of me I can see the relation we’ve had until now crumbling in an instant.

“But now, I realized when I met you, that it’s stupid that I was troubled.”

Are you saying that Anticlimactic also a good place I, and.

“I heard the rumor, and... I was wondering if you had changed, or if you had become a fearsome creature, I was really scared. But it was me the one who ended up changing my attitude towards you who were being thrown all around by the rumors. (10) I’m sorry, about the other day. Because I ended up taking that kind of attitude, you—”

Ran away.

That’s it. Because I couldn’t stand Ariade who was making those eyes at me, nor the inquisitiveness from the surrounding gazes, I ran away from the castle.

“Tell me Vito, you ‘saved’ my little sister, right?”

I saved her younger sister?

I heard the story of Ariade’s sister a long time ago. Also I know she was troubled over it. And I am involved with it as well. But I never mentioned that I saved her.

Without knowing why such a thing was said so suddenly, it made me blink.

“After that, I tried asking her again when she was in a good mood, and she said with a smile, ‘the Dragon saved me.’ I was surprised since she said something different until now. Besides it has been a long time since I saw her smile like that.”

“But, that is”

“My sister said so, so it must be true. I believe in my sister. And, —I want to believe in you as

well.”

Ariade laughs with her usual smile.

“...As per usual I don’t know what you are thinking, but you are surprisingly bad at lying, you’re gentler than anyone, and you even empathically let me converse with you. You also saved my little sister. And, you are sweeter than anyone towards Chiffon. I noticed that, since you are the Vito I know, whether you are a Dragon, whether you are human, that won’t change.”

No! I feel tears coming, such a failure. (11)

“Now that I think of it since your common sense is a bit out of place, it’s not strange that you were a Dragon, or even another kind of creature. Yet it was odd that it was us the one who changed their attitude, and we ended up hurting you. So if from now on we can continue as we have until now, ..that, I’ll be happy. ”

“Ariade... Thank you.”

I’m happy to be able to have wonderful friends. There’s no thing happier than this. Though it would not have been odd even if they persecuted me, they accepted me. Though it would not have been odd even if they rejected me, they smile gently towards me.

Surely Ariade was very troubled as well. So she came to see me trying to find the truth. I’m happy just with that already, but she even said ‘as we have until now.’ There’s nothing happier than this.

...No! I’m about to cry. But there are no more handkerchiefs.

Then from the side a handkerchief with a lot of pink frills was swiftly offered. Maribelle had offered me a handkerchief while facing the other way. Such a favor made me happy, and made me want to cry even more.

“But I think, that I’ll cause trouble to the both of you.”

“Like with the girls we work with, huh? Certainly it has been heard by a lot of people these few days. But I won’t cut my connection to Vito even in the slightest for such a small thing.”

“I’m also fine with it! I want to work together with you again!”

I think that it’ll be impossible to work. Yet those feelings made me happy.

“And besides Vito, you, aren’t Dragon-like at all.”

Ariade laughs and says the same thing that Maribelle says. Am I so un-Dragon-like to such an extent? Should I be glad or not? But I am very happy right now.

“Vito-chan, you, you won’t e, eat me, right?”

“I won’t eat you. Everyone, I won’t eat you.”

As if I could eat you. Even if you asked me to I won’t. Definitely!

Chiffon laughed as if she is relieved. Could it be she was worrying over if I’d eat her or not? Certainly it’s said that I’m a flesh-eating Dragon, but I won’t eat my important friends. Honestly I always want to sigh at this me so full of contradictions; however I can’t go on like this. I won’t get troubled over it now because I won’t find an answer even if I dwell in it.

“What’s more, I’m sorry to have charged at you.”

Ariade directs her line of sight to Maribelle. Chiffon says ‘You were jealous, right?’ and Ariade blushes at this. Is it fine for me to think, that I’m being loved even though I’m like this?

“... Hmph, it’s not like it matters to me anymore.”

Maribelle seems to be complaining somehow. But then I notice that her real feelings were heard in the previous quarrel, and she even lent me a handkerchief. I’ll wash it and return it next time.

She grabs my arm again, and forcefully pulls me.

“We’ll leave if your matters are finished. Not much is left of lunch break.”

Nassau’s rice! It’s not negotiable! But, I feel it’s lonely to separate from the two of them here. Did she notice I was feeling that, Maribelle lets out a big sigh as she looks at Ariade’s, Chiffon’s and my face.

“... In any case, even if you guys want to follow, I will definitely not say it!”

You are a tsundere, I know.

The rear view of Maribelle rapidly walking away on her own is charming.

“Surprisingly she is also a good child. Really, rumors can’t be relied upon.”

I also nodded with a laugh to Ariade’s words.

Translator's Lair~

DEM FEELSSSSssss...

Also, I'm sleepy as well, dunno why. So if there are sentences that makes no sense towards the end it's cause the kitchen is too far away and the cup of coffee doesn't want to prepare itself then fly over on its own no matter how much I will it to...

(1) chiffon & ariade's speeches. Chiffon refers to Vito adding a -chan, while Ariade does not. Also, since Chiffon is more talkative, one can guess who is the one talking and keeping silent.

(2) I know naught of baseball, other than you play it with balls and a stick. ... ehem. There's also a square place and... well, I know just the generals, not the kind of pitches nor anything technical. I wish the Japanese liked football (soccer) more than baseball right now ;-;

(3) a bit unsure about this one~ もともと城には戻る気はなかったから、彼女たちのこともこれっきりだと覚悟していた .

(4) mashoumen, 真正面 (not macho men xD). Can mean right in front, or to confront head on. Goo dictionary:<http://dictionary.goo.ne.jp/jn/208023/meaning/m0u/>.

(5) She literally says that xD whether she meant that her embrace is safe or the like, or that maribelle has tough arms like a man's... I guess it's the former, lol. 彼女が彼氏にする腕の組み方だ。

(6) vito's female harem – so she is aware of this! But what about Captain and Lance!?! btw, stefanos can just die xD the prince could be added too once he stops being a failure of a prince :3

(7) dunno how to express this better: 今なら修羅場の男性の気持ちがわかる i think she says she now understands how the men who fight in battlefields feel, but what the hell does that have to do with anything? It's because those men are pursued by lots of women or something?

(8) 怒鳴り合う – tentative Reading: okonariau. Apparently means to shout to each other. Not

sure~<http://ejje.weblio.jp/sentence/content/%E6%80%92%E9%B3%B4%E3%82%8A%E5%90>
I really liked this page, since it shows you translations of sentences in English containing your Japanese word *-*

(9) Chiffon says dragon in hiragana どらごん rather than the katakana that's often used to write it. ドラゴン. Probably as a mean to differentiate that usually Dragon is used to refer to the country's holy beast or important species, but here chiffon meant, like, a beast or something unknown.

(10) sayuusareru – sayuusuru: to be thrown left and right. Dunno how to make it sound better here... 左右されて。 = でも噂に左右されて貴方に対する態度が変わってしまっていたのは私の方だったわ。

(11) urutto – urutto suru. うるっと To be about spilling tears; that tears are about to come out. Yahoo answers
(jp):http://detail.chiebukuro.yahoo.co.jp/qa/question_detail/q1478264464

Chapter 29

Together with Lord Cleric. The Japanese from three hundred years ago. Reason of summoning.

I had completely forgotten about Timo's message.

But in order to meet Lord Cleric, formalities have to be made. When I was worrying over what to do, a summon arrived from the person himself at a timing that is so good that it gives me a bad feeling.

And also I feel intimidated by going into that strange room again. The feeling of your clothes not getting wet when you enter is not good.

At the time the sun sank, I visited Lord Cleric's room. Standing in the center of the room as always, I really want to know what happened to his hair. No matter when you look at it his face is pure white as if devoid of any flowing blood. He is beautiful, but in some respects he directs a cold smile to greet me.

"You properly came over."

"...It was you the one who called for me though."

I approached him reluctantly because he was beckoning me with his hand with a 'come, come.' Two meters, this is the limit distance. If I get closer than this the danger signal in my brain becomes red. By the way, it's yellow now. As I was showing my wariness, he says 'it can't be helped then,' and laughs.

"Apparently the castle is buzzing with talks about you. I hadn't thought you'd reveal your identity yourself huh, ooh, I'm not trying to say that it's bad. But I just thought that it was unusual for you to do so. It was, right? Yes, it was. "

As usual, concluded on his own. As I asked him, 'what do you mean unusual,' a meaningful smile came about on his face.

"Because the 'you from when you lived as a human' seemed to have lived by the principle of being as inconspicuous as possible, hehehe."

"...How, do you know that...!"

I feel like my heart has been gripped by an eagle's claws. (1) Involuntarily I raised my voice.

I did not say anything to Lord Cleric. Nothing about my matters as a Dragon, let alone about my human memories, I've only told Timo about it. Why does he know of them. Even though I only have vague memories of it that I can barely recall, ...then, how does he know?

"Ah, this won't do, it seems to be a habit of mine to make others wary of me. Even though all I do is say the truth. Don't you think so? But apparently it startled you, I'm sorry to frighten you. ...Perhaps your human memories are very unclear?"

I was not able to say a word. I feel so uncomfortable as if he saw through everything, through every part of me.

As expected I shouldn't have come to meet him!

Lord Cleric, not waiting for my words, continues to speak alone.

"I shall take that as confirmation. Is that so, if so it's not strange that you are in confusion, but I agree. (2) I was thinking you were very strange. About how you can go on living as a Dragon while carrying human memories. I'm sure it is because your human memories are faint, because if not, by now you would have surely — gone crazy and died."

"Cra, zy?"

"That's right. It's usually not possible for the memories of two different organisms to mingle together. If that really happened, you would go insane as a result of not knowing what to believe in due to being full of contradictions in your thoughts and in your morals. So your presence was very strange."

Certainly there are a lot of contradictions in me. I've also been thinking and worrying about it. But without doubt it is not something that troubles me enough to go mad. It is, because my human memories are vague? Is he saying that if they weren't vague and I had a sense of self as a Dragon, by now I'd be dead after going mad?

I can't believe it, I can't think about it. I don't even want to think about it.

"So I think, that when you recall all of your human memories, it would be good to think that that will be the 'end' of you."

I feel that I have been given the death penalty.

I wonder if he's saying that it will be the end of my life, or it'll be an ending in a different meaning. I don't understand.

Meeting with Lord Cleric is always like this. I feel sick by all the things I don't know about.

"It's fine. Please do not get troubled over it so seriously. You are an irregular existence for me so no matter what happens it won't be strange. Well, I guess there are what are known as cheats and templates, so won't you manage somehow or another? (3) It's like that, right? yeah, I'm sure it'll be like that."

This Lord Cleric sure can speak as if he knows writing slang. (4) And he excessively sends his best throw as always. His sweetly smiling face is too mischievous.

“Those are, things that happen in stories, but in reality... they don’t, right? In the first place why does Lord Cleric know such vocabulary?”

“By becoming a medium for knowledge, if anything happens I can know something about it. This time the knowledge is related to you, ...is what I’d like to say, but I was taught before.”

What do you mean, before.

“Besides smoke doesn’t appear where there has been no fire. Furthermore summoning magic was practiced before in this country. Amongst those people there were those that contributed to this country with their knowledge, as well as heroes who helped us in wars. And there were also people who had a family, and people who lived normally in peace and returned to their original world. I’m sure that those people wrote stories in your world. And amongst the summoned ones there were those who became tied to the royal family and those who became Knights. That kind of stories, didn’t they exist in your world?

There are. In particular, I remember that my brother was very fond of them. To the point of speaking of his delusion stories. (5)

But this is shady somehow. Yet, it seems to be true that summoning magic was practiced here, and what Lord Cleric is saying is not necessarily a lie. But there’s no way I’ll believe such a thing so easily. Because there are no people who can prove that anymore.

“That’s right, you definitely were Japanese. In the past, the hero who was accompanied by a pink Earth Dragon was a Japanese youth. He ended up returning to his original world after leading us to victory in war. He was a very brave and interesting person.”

To say it happened 300 years ago, while making a face as if this is something that happened just the other day, really makes you think ‘this person has actually lived so long.’ He’s beautiful, but as I realize that his cold expression gives a little way to a calm smile, it also makes you think ‘this person does give off the presence of a Great Cleric.’ (5.5)

Even so, I haven’t said anything yet he sure keeps on chattering. He’s the chattering living history. (6)

“That person, he taught me.”

“Yeah, and he, though he led us to victory in war because he was the Earth Dragon’s Contractor, he was actually a very appropriate and well-qualified person.”

To be summoned, to contract the country’s Sacred Beast, to bravely save said country and then to return to their own world, it’s the template for some kind of hero. And to know those words, then he couldn’t be just a random person. I know them because I learned them as second-hand knowledge from my brother, but any ordinary person wouldn’t know them, right?

... Wait a minute. The fact that he returned to his original world, then what happened to his contracted Earth Dragon?

“What happened to that Earth Dragon?”

“It went together with the youth after taking on the form of a cat.” (7)

It’s not Hachiko the Faithful Dog but the Faithful Pink Dragon. (8) It left the world it lived in behind in order to be together with that human?

If returning magic exists, then maybe it’d be possible to go home to my human world. But I don’t know from where I am, and I’m Dragon now. Even if I think I wish to, I can’t return, can I?

“Hehehe, by chance, are you interested in the summoning magic? That’s right, perhaps you might have been dropped in this world after getting involved in something. It’s very strange that you have only human memories, it hadn’t happened in the past. However, though it hurts my heart very much to say this, it’s a pity, but there is no solution to this.”

It troubles me that you say it smiling so radiantly. And it doesn’t look like you are feeling hurt at all.

“That summoning magic, if it has been done 300 years ago, I don’t think it’d be too rare for it to be practiced even now, but,”

I wonder if it was some kind of fad. But to be summoned with such a bang bang because of a fad is also something troublesome.

“I’ve said it had been practiced frequently before, but that doesn’t mean everyone can do it. A certain book is needed.”

“Are you saying that because that book is lost, summoning magic itself has become obsolete? That it was lost... isn’t that a grave matter?”

Though I don’t know of the extent of that book’s power, if it fell in the hands of people who’d misuse it, the continent could fall into chaos by summoning a lot of people and tricking them, couldn’t it?

“That’s right, but the ones who know how to use it are just me and very few people. And besides the book disappeared when that hero returned to his original world, so maybe by chance that person took it with him when he left.”

That doesn’t seem improbable at all. If the book was taken away by the hero then summoning magic can’t be used anymore.

For the sake of what did that person take the book with him, there is no reason for me to know.

But, I found a connection.

As for my world, I only have this world, but I was feeling I was part of both the world of my human memories and this other world, yet I didn't know from which I was originally, nor if my memories were real. But if you say that Japanese people, the same as me, have been summoned, then I can't avoid thinking that my human memories may be from that same world.

Little by little, I feel that the answer is coming into view.

I had given up since no matter how much I troubled over it I'd reach no answer, yet something is coming into view now, little by little. I want to know, but I'm also a little scared.

And, I'm puzzled.

At that time, I heard the voice of a dignified lovely girl from behind.

"Lord Cleric, your time to be cleansed is approaching."

"Oh, it is that time already?"

I wonder since when was she behind me, or was she back there all along, the one who is standing in the back is a girl who has the same hair color as Lord Cleric. And wearing a simple costume made of one piece cloth with little exposure, yet wearing a lot of hair ornaments, bracelets and the like. At first glance she may look like a dancer, but from her neat feeling she seems more like a Miko rather than a Cleric. (8.5)

"She is my successor and current caretaker. Because I cannot move from here, she is the one who takes care of most things for me."

"N, nice to meet you, Lady Vito. My name is Leiya." (9)

Without noticing, I was fascinated by that smile, so pure and innocent that it is as if it has never known the filth from the outside world.

As I was in that state Lord Cleric softly whispers near my ear.

"Leiya has never been out of this castle. On top of that it was decided she'd be my successor as soon as she was born; since you seem to be of the same age, won't you get along with her for me?"

What Lord Cleric's says to me sounds like what a caring relative would say about a sheltered daughter. As I was thinking, 'this sure is the forecast of a cataclysm,' he mutters, "how cruel." Can he foresee everything?

The girl approaches me in a trot, and says while her cheeks become dyed in red.

"U, uhm, that rumor, I have heard of it. I have even heard about this from Lord Cleric. ...I, I respect you! Please shake my hand!"

“Huh?”

What’s with this child.

She comes my way asking for a handshake in high spirits, as if she had met a great star. (10) Her hand is as white as snow. Since I couldn’t let her feelings down, as she was filled with glistening expectations, I gave her a small handshake, and she smiled with a ‘ehehe.’ What’s this, so cute. If Maribelle is of a gorgeous cuteness, and Chiffon’s cuteness is of a naive purity, then hers is a charming cuteness. I was enlightened that there are many types of cuteness.

Even so, I’m worried about if Lord Cleric hasn’t said any half-truths.

“Leiya, please go ahead to make the preparations. I still have something to talk about here.”

“Y- yes!”

She seems to have the ditz attribute. She left the room while tumbling on her clothes.

It was cute how she bashfully looked back intermittently with her head lowered.

“When she said ‘to be cleansed,’ what did she mean?”

“It is something like strengthening the wedges that tie me here. As the power of the wedges has weakened lately it seems I might die.”

“... No way.”

Even though he’s so lively and healthy.

“Originally it is as if I’m dead.”

“If you were dead, it wouldn’t be possible for us to be speaking like this, would it?”

“Using forbidden magic I’m getting only an eternally youthful body. It’s like I’m dead. If not there would be no way for a common human being to live for more than a thousand years, right? Hehehe, did I surprise you?”

“...Well that’s that but”

“And in this world, the only ones who have used that are me and a witch, and someone else who, perhaps, will be the culprit of the incident that will occur in the near future of this world.”

Another one? I wonder if Lord Cleric read something about the future.

“Speaking of witch, hehehe, I had totally forgotten, but did Timotea Norris say something?”

It's a name that I've never heard, but I wonder if maybe he refers to Timo. She had also muttered 'Timotea', and she had even forgotten her own name so such a thing... could be possible.

"Since it's like that I believe you already know of it." (Vito)

"No way. Well, just the generalities of it. I'm asking you because I am not omniscient."

He's still going on with that. Apparently it hurt his feelings a great extent to be told that he is not omniscient. Though you are a Cleric your heart is so naaarroow!

"She said that there might be other enemies, and that eventually something that entraps the whole continent in chaos will occur."

"Hmm, ...it was as I thought."

If you thought so then don't ask me in the first place. I'd like to say that, but strangely Lord Cleric looks like he's troubled over something with a meek look on. With his silver eyes closed, looking at him like this there's no way that he doesn't look like a doll. Beautiful to the point you won't believe he's human, and somehow an ephemeral atmosphere drifts around... If only he didn't have this personality.

"That time will arrive soon, huh.. "

He was chatting so vigorously without listening to anyone but like it was a lie, he suddenly shut up. Anyway, I don't know if he doesn't have someone to talk to, but I think he does talk too much.

And yet, since he is in the habit to only give me vague answers, I feel like I'm always trying to grab air. If he became a war prisoner, he seems like he'd easily tell on his allies' weaknesses. Totally like an Italian soldier. (11)

Something that will plunge the whole continent into chaos, is it? I wonder if it will be something like the outbreak of a great war that will engulf the continent.

Lord Cleric was pondering for a while, but returned to his usual dubious expression when he muttered in a small voice, "Well, isn't it fine?" And though I say we're separated by 2 meters, but he pulled his naked feet out of the fountain and places them on the floor. He walk as it is for a few steps, and as I was perplexed he grabbed my arm. (12)

—Eh?

It's unfair because I was convinced that he could not move from that location. I am surprised. Can he move only a little away from there? Such a mistake.

And he laughs with a complacent smile.

"Well then, for the end I shall teach you how to make a contract."

“I do not need it! ...And weren't you running out of time?”

What is this person saying so out of the blue!

Lord Cleric is laughing as if the me who gave an immediate reply was funny. However I'm extremely serious.

“The time is still all right, even so, I think it's good for you to know this.”

“But, that is irrelevant to me -”

“Do you really think so? From the bottom of your heart, do you really think so?”

If you say that then it becomes a lie. There is no way that I haven't thought about the contract. My real intention is to try not to think about it.

Lord Cleric's face comes sliding closer. (13) I am being reflected on those silver pupils. Not the appearance of my human self, but just the figure of a village girl.

“If there are in you any thoughts similar to wanting to protect this country even a little, it will be gratifying for us. Is that right? That's right. There is no way we won't feel delighted about that.”

The danger signal is flashing within my brain.

And even though he is like a small child, his grasp on my arm is strong like an adult male's. No, it's not that kind of thing. No matter how much I struggle to resist that force, with a start I notice that I can't move.

His face comes even closer. (14)

“I understand.... If I only have to listen then I'll listen.”

But I'll absolutely not do it!!

“Such an earnest conclusion.”

I just sigh towards Lord Cleric who smiles candidly.

Really, talking to Lord Cleric is mentally tiring.

I was walking down the hallway after slipping out of that strange room earlier. It's really helpful that there's no one around since it's night time. Is a relief from being targeted by sneaky and secret talks due to this invitation.

神巫様が時間帯を指定したのは、人が少ないのを見計らっていたからだろうか。案外優しい所もあるんだな、と思いかけて慌てて首を振る。

いやいやいや、そんなわけがない、はやくマリベルの所へ戻ろう。

そもそもあの人はからかうのが好きだし一方通行に喋ってばかりだし迷惑をか——・・・え？

——頭に、大きな衝撃。

突然、目の前が真っ暗になった。

The reason Lord Cleric specified this time frame to visit, I wonder if it was because there are fewer people. Surprisingly he also has a kind side, as I discovered myself thinking that I confusedly shake my head in a hurry.

Nonono, there is no way that's true, let's quickly return to Maribelle's place.

In the first place that person likes to tease others, and only talks like a one-way traffic street, and loves to be a bother for o— ...Eh?

— To my head, a big impact.

Suddenly, everything before my eyes went black.

Dragon Life Chapter 30

Chapter 30

Abduction incident breaks out during a vivid dream. My connections to others.

IMPORTANT t/n: i'll be using oniichan/niichan (older brother) & neechan (older sister) in this part, because a difference is needed. Note that adding an 'o' as a prefix adds a connotation of respect. And, i'll use capital letters to replace the ***s that the author used, so you can tell the difference easily, since it took me a while, and it's more difficult without kanjis xD

※ warning of reference to the author. (author's note)(1)

Second, DREAM.(2)

"A trip to another world seems to happen when the hero falls into a dangerous situation."
(A person)

"That's the trigger?" (B person)

"Certainly I wanted to do some practice right now, so for the time being I wanted to try jumping out from the window, but ... as expected, is it impossible?"

"It's impossible."

"Well then, I wonder if it would work if I took the pattern of the easiest way out, being run over by a large truck. (3) Yes, I feel that it will work if I go with this."

"So you have a death wish?! And you want to go to a different world that badly?"

"I'm telling you I want to go! If I go to another world I'll get a mysterious power for free and will be unconditionally popular with the cute girls, right?! Or if I shouldered the important task of saving the world, my mediocre self will go raising the surroundings' trust & love, while facing conflicts and being called 'how reckless!' ... Ah, other worlds are amazing! Please take me to you!!"

"That's just running away. It's merely taking refuge in a convenient world, you know."

"Erm. You cut straight through my dream... such a COOL fellow."

"But well, as long as you yourself are satisfied by your escape, I think that's fine."

"Hmm?"

"I think there 's no need to overdoing it and facing the things you hate. If you hate

something then it's fine to run away from it. It's not necessary to achieve victory."

"Ah, you are like that. The forgiving hypocrite type, are you?"

"Hypocrite? ...Maybe. But even if that was a lie, as long as I can save someone by that I think it's be fine. Overdoing things and thrusting at reality, rather than making those people unhappy, it'd be best for them to happily soak in the lukewarm water of a dream. Because then both the person himself, and the people watching at them, will let out a sigh at feeling relieved."

"It's rare for you to agree, do you have a fever?"

"How rude. I'm properly answering to Oniichan's embarrassing delusive stories, but since you said that I'll eat all the pudding."

"*B*! Are you purposely eating my pudding again?!"

"Don't cry so pudding-like."

"'-Like', what do you mean '-like'! Pudding's the food that moistens the everyday life for me!"

"Okay okay, it's half-eaten but I'll return it to you."

"It, it's half-eaten? Well, surely this is the commonly known as an indirect ki-..."

"In the end, Oniichan, you are no good. *C*, won't you eat instead?"

"Eeh, that which was half-eaten by my neechan?" (C person)

"...so not cute." (B person)

"What about neechan, how about cutting those long-winded bangs? And if you switched to contacts you'd look a little cute? Your face's similar to mine." (C person)

"What about you, *C*, you're in middle school so stop it with the blond hair please. It's a violation of school rules. And you're a narcissist." (B person)

"I'm not being told off because my marks are good. I'm also totally wondering why we get along so badly though we are older sister and younger brother."

"Wasn't all the goodness within my head taken by *C*? So, will you take the pudding? Will you not?"

"I will."

"Oh younger brother and sister! I think you're both so cute I can't stand it!!" (A person)(4)

"Oniichan, shut up." "Niichan, shuddup." (B – C)

“...hurts”

It caught me off guard.

Apparently the back of my head was hit at full force, I feel a dull pain in my head. And my body is so rigid it's creaking all over. (5)

Even so, I had a dream again. I see only strange dreams recently. That I had an older brother and a younger one, that the elder one held onto his own delusive fantasies, that we talked about pudding, it was a dream about doing foolish talks. It might possibly be a recollection from when I was human. But it's strange to have such a distinct dream. Somehow it gave me a nostalgic feeling, but through it I also remembered some freshness. When a name was mentioned I could not hear it as if there was noise, and since the appearances are also vague I can't remember them. — Brother, I might have slipped inside someone that could be called a character from the other worlds that you dream of. Please don't think, 'so envious.' Because I'm living a desperate everyday.

—It is useless. The human memories I regain are only for a moment, after that they are pushed to the very back as if they had been hidden by clouds.

This absolutely feels as if they were being controlled, like I wasn't allowed to remember any more than this.

Since there's no helping this I decide to look around.

“Where, is”

I was surrounded by bars. When I stood up my head grazed the ceiling. Apparently I seem to be trapped in a cage. Also, it has been decorated with ornaments of a bad taste, as if it was a bird cage. I feel just like a bird which is only meant to be exhibited. Probably because of the room, which is of a very luxurious decoration, I'm meant to be a rare ornamental bird. I'm not a thing to be exhibited, however.

“Oh, did you wake up?”

Was he in the room? A middle-aged man approaches me. His hair is barely there, but his belly makes me think he has invested a lot of money in it, and on his garments he wears several rings and necklaces. He gives me the feeling of being your typical Lord Noble who only works to enrich himself. Behind the middle-aged man there are several people wearing hoods, they stood there like they were standing guard. It's really like they are dressed for executing a black magic ritual. No way I am a sacrifice? Yeah there's no way. ...right?

"You didn't wake up after two days so we thought you were dead."

Was I fainted for two days, no wonder my body is creaking. Why would I sleep so much, the hit was too strong? I wonder if that's the reason I even had that dream.

"...Who are you?"

"My name is Tommaso Sommer, I alone am responsible for the center of Alvina Kingdom. For the King, the Sommer House has a great influence, isn't that awesome?"

Now that you mention it, I haven't met the King yet. I kinda think it is not necessary for me to meet him though. Certainly he was bed-ridden by some illness, wasn't he? I heard that's the reason for that Prince to be taking command over many things.

Even so, to be the person responsible for the central parts of Alvina Kingdom, is he what is called a 'close aide'? But for such a person to be in charge, what the heck.

"Our behavior was a little violent on you, but I think you would not talk obediently with otherwise."

Yeah, my head is in pain. In quite a pain.

"Make a contract with me."

'You haven't made a contract yet, right?' I don't know where did he hear that but he said so confidently.

...No way, does this mean that the kidnapped and confined me for that. Cut it out. You made me feel such pain for that! (6) No way, what he wants is wealth and fame? ...So people like this also exist. Since recently I have only spent time around my kind friends I completely forgot this type of people existed. In the end this world isn't sweet at all... I'll engrave it in my heart so I won't forget it. (7)

But it's infuriating to use me to obtain wealth and fame. And, as a person of this country, he certainly knows what it pertains to be contracted to the Earth Dragon. Could this be like going to war with hands that have never wielded a sword nor known no bean? (8) He gives me the feeling that he doesn't think about anything other than himself. That said, I'm also someone who doesn't know war, and doesn't think about anything other than myself.

Let's probe him a little.

"Would you happen to have the resolution to fight for this country's sake?"

"Hah?"

He lets out a bewildered sound, as if he never thought questions would come from my side.

This is no good, is it.

“Would you happen to have the resolution to head for the frontlines along with me, to murder a multitude of humans, and to become a hero?”

“Tha, that’s a matter of course!”

Are you sure? Your voice is trembling though. (9)

“Then, — the resolution to die, do you have it?”

The man quickly went silent.

He seems to have more or less known about what to do battle is, but ‘to die’ was out of his expectations.

“To go to war is to have the resolution to die, you must be prepared to risk your life for the country. People like you, who live an everyday devoid of any inconvenience, and only thinking of wealth and prestige, are unfit to be my partner.”

Originally, I didn’t even have the slightest desire to make a contract with someone.

“It’s a pity, but you fail.”

“Wha, what did you say...”

As I laugh scornfully through my nose, saying ‘it won’t happen,’ his face becomes bright red like a boiled octopus.

I might have been too excited and ended up saying too much. I’m sorry uncle, it’s cause my head hurts too much.

Anyway this has followed a standard abduction pattern. So will someone come and help me? Hm? Because it’s generally here where the hero comes in to the rescue and from there love blooms, you know. I know. ... I say so but, it may be bad to say this, but such a small cage, I can easily destroy it. Who do you think I am. I don’t have the temperament of a heroin who would yearn the hero, waiting while crying.

As I lay my hands on the cage, the man yells.

“You’d better stop that!! Because a high-voltage current is flowing through it with magic! To escape so easily will be—”

Before the man stops talking I grab the bars with both hands. The current travels over my whole body with rattling sounds but I change my skin into scales to prevent it from getting inside my body. And by applying all of my strength into them the bars bend effortlessly. Aren’t I kinda gallant.

After a ‘yo-heave-ho’ and exiting from inside the cage, the man opened his eyes really wide until it seemed as if he was wondering ‘just like that?’, and opened and closed his mouth like a goldfish. (10)

“This, you’d better improve it.”

‘It’d be better for you to think more deeply if you want to catch me.’ As I voice that with a laugh the man’s face goes bright red face and he yells.

“Ca, catch her!! Absolutely don’t let her escape!!”

— Eh, no way.

The men who were concealed in hoods by the side come jumping towards me all at once. However, before they reach me, I noticed that from amongst the several men who were wearing a robe some started to attack their comrades, so I thought they may be having a fall out, but something feels off somehow.

“Hey you! What are you doing!!”

I can’t understand what’s going on either, but as i was thinking ‘itwould.be good if I can escape now’ and was looking for the opportunity to do so, suddenly the middle-aged man started shouting.

“Alright! It’s enough, I’ll finish her myself!!”

As he grew impatient he collected his sword which had rolled onto the floor and approached me.

—Eh, wait. You mean ‘finish’ as in ‘kill’? Wai, waitwaitwait! You’ll lose the chance to make a contract with me! What is this person thinking!

Can’t he make a calm decision? The middle aged man wields his sword at me.

... But, the sword was not swung down onto me at all.

Bam, with a thick sound the man collapsed in front of me as if he had used up all of his strength. I was seriously scared because for a moment he directed me a really cold glare. How scary.

Behind the man there was a single person from the hooded ones from earlier, standing with the handle of his sword facing this way. He seems to have done something like striking him with the back of the sword without actually cutting him down.

And that person comes walking here tramping down on the man without any hesitation. It seems this person was your boss once, is it all right to do that?

“Vito.”

The face that came out as he removed the hood on his way here, was a very familiar face.

“Captain...”

The Captain does not stop in front of me, as if he wanted to bump into me; he hugs me tightly. So strongly that I can't breathe. A fast beat, perceived even through his clothes, is transmitted. He seems to be a little out of breath, was it because he was engaging this man earlier? The sigh he takes by my ear feels a little ticklish.

"Don't do dangerous things... I was worried."

"About the electric current? I'm okay."

"About that as well."

Uhm, I wonder what other thing I did could have been dangerous. I can't think of anything. Other than that there is only quarreling with the middle-aged man and bending the bars.

But wait, for him to appear from behind the middle-aged man, and in this get-up, could it be he watched it all? ... So embarrassing.

"But, I'm glad."

The Captain laughs casually.

I am not! If you were there from the beginning I'd have liked it if you'd say so! Or the like. Surely he was waiting for the correct timing, I guess. I was inside a cage, and with a high-voltage electric current running through it, he wouldn't be able to touch it.

Some time later, the matters in the surrounding seem to have been settled as some of the men have been apprehended. As the others removed their robes, I was surprised yet again to see familiar faces.

"Could they be Sir Lance and the rest?"

The Captain nods.

"Let's leave."

"Uwah..."

Lightly picking me up in his arms, he starts walking. I was surprised because he was an unexpectedly strong man, not to mention that such a sudden thing made me go stiff.

—Just a moment please. It's me the one with an expertise in making rescues! In particular, I'm a professional at rescuing Captains! I'm not giving this up! Since until now I have managed on my own somehow, from when I lived on the Vizannu Mountains, and when I lived alone, so now it's the first time I rely on others, from being rescued for the first time, and, how should I say it, to be picked up in someone's arms, it's my first time as well.

Honestly, I was perplexed.

'Please let me down one way or another,' I say in a haste. I wonder if maybe he thinks things

are still dangerous.

“Captain, it’s alright already. Who do you think I am?”

— If there’s only this much then I’m confident I can show you that I’m able to handle it on my o—

“My important girl.”

...

.....

.....

WHAT DID YOU SAY!?

With that my face became totally red as if it was emitting fire. Since I didn’t want the Captain to see my embarrassed, bright red face I hid it against his shoulder. My face is hot.

“... That’s unfair.”

The Captain just giggles softly like always.

Neither a dragon, nor human. I feel happy to be treated like a girl. But, I feel embarrassed.

Anyway does the Captain like me because I’m a Dragon? Right? Tell me that’s right!

As I was awkwardly waiting in a room with the Captain, Lance and Stefanos came back, did they settle everything down? The Vice-Captain has gone to make the report about the matters this time. I thought how it was nice that it wasn’t the Captain the one to do it, but apparently it’s usually the Vice-Captain the one to go. Well, because he has a little reticent side, I guess the one to do it should be the one most suitable for it. (11) (and they’re back at the castle.)

The incident this time, since it seemed one of the retainers was making unnatural movements, when they paid attention they noticed I had gone missing, so they assumed I had been caught.

To be missing for two days, if it were a human they wouldn’t be able to stand it, I’m glad it was me. ...Though I’m not sure about that. First of all I’m glad that I returned safely. And besides I was trapped for two days, but because the incident ended right after I woke up, I didn’t actually get distressed.

And now Chiffon, who appeared from nowhere, is clinging to me. Her breasts are a bother and they should be making the clinging difficult. But let's just say that my chest is a cutting board so everything works just right. That's wrong, my thoughts are becoming like those of a dirty old man like again. By the way Ariade's here too.

"Vito-chan, uwaah, where had you gooone...!"

I made her cry again.

It seems I did not notice anything since I was soundly asleep while staying inside a dream. I'm sorry.

"We were worried. You have an unexpectedly delicate side so we were wondering if you weren't troubled over something again."

"S, sorry."

I'm really sorry. I can't do anything other than to apologize.

At that moment, someone opened the door at full force.

"Vito !! Just how much do you plan on making me worry—- !!"

The one that suddenly entered the room like a torrent was Maribelle. She walks to my side with long strides, and glares at me with up-turned eyes. Somehow, her pupils look clouded to me. Was she worried about me? But, was it because she noticed Lance's present in the room, with an 'Ah!' her expression suddenly becomes a tranquil one. Maidens in love are always healthy.

"A, anyway. If anything happens then say it properly!"

'As if I had the chance, imprisoned as I was,' I said, but I was replied with an 'as if I could have known that!' Like that.

I was fine because that man talked to me the moment I woke up, but if it had been someone who would use coercive methods, by now some unspeakable thing may have happened to me, and certainly it wouldn't have been rare for me to be sold off to some other land. I'm really glad it was a talkative person.

"Lady Maribelle noticed quickly that Miss Vito had gone missing."

At being smiled at by Lance, Maribelle's face blushes. I see. Certainly for now I'm only a freeloader in Maribelle's room. Probably as she noticed that I didn't return when it became late, she told this to the nearby Vice-Captain.

"So it was like that... Thank you, Maribelle."

"H, hmph. Not that I care."

Her face is red. Is she not used to compliments, she looks away shyly when I thank her. Since that's so cute I really want to meddle with her. ...As I was thinking that now I could understand Stefanos' feelings of wanting to meddle with cute girls, from nearby I heard a hearty laughter that was as if it couldn't be contained anymore.

"This guy, 's so funny! 'Cause she just burst opened the thick prison bars with her bare hands! I can't help but laugh!"

The one holding his sides from laughing without reservation was Stefanos. I want to kick him flying.

I want you to stop that. That's not something to laugh at. I was desperate to get out. What I mean is if you were watching then I'd have loved it for you to stop it immediately. Otherwise there's no meaning in having come to help me!

Lance was troubled over this at first, but, did he give up? He said 'sorry' to me while looking perplexed.

"You did such a dangerous thing!?"

While I was sulking at Stefanos's attitude, Ariade's eyes go wide open and she takes a hold of my shoulders. I was surprised because it was so sudden.

"Eh, oh, I'm not human you know. For me, bars can be easily ..."

"That has nothing to do with it! It's because you are a girl!"

I ended up being rebuked by Ariade.

"But I think that, isn't it useless for you to expect me to be human girl?"

When I say human, is a human girl from this world. Everyone compared to me can use elegant words, and I don't know a thing about trends and fashion. And I, I want to wear pants! I want to complain about that. But if I said that kinda thing then Ariade will get end up getting angry at me again so I kept silent.

"Then I'll teach you. And you, you have a side which is a little crude. I'll take the chance to fix you. Because I'll lend you clothes and things that will make you even cuter."

"Wait a second please. Vito is now living in my room, so I'll teach her!"

With a squishy sound, I notice that my arm has been taken a hold of by Maribelle as she lashed out to Ariade.

"Oh, but I think the size of the clothes you have won't fit her."

"Ggh, then I'll go buy some!"

I was thinking they had been getting along after so much trouble, but this is kind of the

friendship between cats and dogs, or like they get along well enough to be quarreling? Although I'm not sure whether that's good or bad.

"Stop it you twoooo...!"

Yeah, quit it please. Chiffon's tears have finally stopped and you'll make her cry again. Don't fight over meeee! Yeah, this feels good after all.

At the two's quarrel, Stefanos is laughing even more, Lance is making a bitter smile, and Chiffon is desperately trying to stop the quarrel.

If I wasn't here, I would not be able to see this side of them, would I?

At thinking that, somehow I thought it was funnnny, and it naturally made me smile.

"Captain."

At my call, the Captain, who was nearby, directs his line of sight towards me.

"I'm wondering if it's alright for me to think that I'm very cherished."

The fact that there exists someone who would be worried about me makes me so happy that my heart warms up.

Am I allowed to believe that, although I am a Dragon, so different from their human selves, some kind of connection that can not be seen between them and I has been made?

Captain, while stroking my head, makes his usual gentle smile.

"You are very cherished."

Somehow, I wanted to cry from joy.

As I wipe away the tears that gathered at the corner of my eyes, I become flustered because even more tears keep coming, so I use both hands to hide my face.

—Ho, how weird. Although I'm not someone who is easily brought to tears. (12)

Suddenly, while I was all flustered about these uncontained tears, both of my hands are teared away from my face. In that manner something comes in contact with my face with a soft sound, and goes gradually stealing my tears.

The Captain placed his hand at the back of my head and brought me closer to him; without minding that his uniform gets wet, he had hugged me to his chest as if I had fallen forwards.

Really, he's too gentle.

I'm thankful that I'm not moaning. I'm not sobbing either, only, quiet tears keep coming out from my pupils. If I also moaned it would be so disgraceful. I don't want to show such an

undignified figure to others.

This is my pride.

How many times has he seen my weak side already. I don't want to show him this any longer.

And everyone's here as well.

Did Ariade and Maribelle end their quarrel already? I can hear both the calm voice and the high-pitched voice.

Somehow I thought that was amusing, so I laugh with tears in my eyes, yet, I heard something being whispered to me in a sigh which only I could hear.

"Vito, you are very cherished; I love you."

—Yes?

My tears receded.

in the end, since I was kinda afraid, I could not face him at all.

Translator's Lair~

(1) METAhatsugen again xD and there's actually at least one other chapter ahead which contains a warning from the very author. (and i'm looking forwards to it!)

(2) this was a little confusing to translate the first time, but since this is the second time i see it then i know what this is about. this sentence is just two words: Futatsu, YUME. (ふたつ、ユメ。)so it could mean 'two, dreams' 'dream, two'... well, now i know she'll name her dreams like that, so i'll go with 'second, DREAM'. and i have to go back and change the first one to 'first, DREAM.' yay. oh i love going back to correct things. no, really, i do (not).

(3) Puhahahahahha Truck-san is recognized even within novels to be a fool-proof gateout to other worlds. hahaahah... Erm, i mean, the actual note is this: 王道パターン (Oo-Dou-PATTERN),the pattern of the 'royal road', which is the 'easiest way to achieve one's goal.' viva yahoo answers for giving me an answer in english for a change!

(4) me ni iretemo itakunai – 目にいれても痛くない – literally 'even if it enters my eyes it won't hurt'. and you won't feel something which you love, or is very very cute will bother you if it enters or pokes your eye, right? xD so it's something which is so cute or lovely that you'd forgive it even if it enters your eye... i didn't invent that, don't ask me~ kotozawa (japanese)

(5)それに体中が軋む. (and my whole body is creaking). Yeah... I added rigid.

(6) not sure~こんなに頭が痛い思いをしてそれか！

(7) 肝に銘じよう。 – to engrave something in one's liver xD it means, if I understood correctly, that when something makes your heart stop, to make sure you won't ever forget it. It's written as 'kimo ni meizuru.' (強く心に留め、決して忘れないようにすること。「肝に銘ずる」と書く。) weblio

(8) no idea if it's a saying or something. I'm guessing that 'known no bean', may mean that they've not even farmed before, so it's a person who knows nothing in practice. 剣も持った事のない、まめも知らない手で、戦争に行けると言うのか

(9) but your voice is turning inside out, literally xD just a wild guess~声が裏返っているけど.

(10) wild guess sentence!! xD 男は目をこれでもかと言うぐらいにかっと思開いて口を金魚みたいにはくぱくとさせていた。(at this rate I'm gonna change the site's name to Wild Guess Translations, lol.)

(11) lost this note, I'll update it later, maybe xD it was just an idiom – the right person at the right place.

(12) 私こんなに涙腺弱くないんだけど。 - 'though my lacrimal glands are not this weak' xD

Chapter 31 – part 1

The inside circumstances of Alvina Kingdom and the fake act of vampirism. Feeling remorse.

✂ **Warning: blood-sucking situation. (Author's Note)**

Recently, not only the castle, but the castle town has been hectic as well.

More than a week has gone by since the incident with the messenger, but it seems that finally a declaration of war has arrived from Tiruzoto. Regarding this matter, probably since this also concerns me, it has been decided that I'll participate in a meeting with the higher-ups. Honestly, I do not want to attend, but I also have some responsibility more or less and I'm feeling a little remorse.

When called by the Prince to go into the designated room, the country's big shots were sitting in a row along a long desk. There are 6 people, including the Prince. As I was standing rock still without saying a word from the intimidating atmosphere and a feeling of coercion, the Prince prompted me with a "there" to locate myself right opposite of him. It really gives me the same tension such as if standing at a witness stand. Though I wasn't made to stand. (1)

"You finally came, huh."

At the Prince's single sentence the surroundings become filled with conversation. *blahblah* *blahblah* ...I understand.

"This young lass is?"

"It should be a mistake."

"... No, however if this was true, then this war"

"The previous Earth Dragon could also take the for of other organisms but"

I can hear you, uncles. If you want to speak more secretly then I wish you would do so more sneakily. Certainly I even have an endorsement from Maribel and Ariade about me being absolutely un-like a Dragon. I don't know whether that is something I should be proud of or not but I don't like to be called a young lass. It makes me remember something unpleasant.

“Vito, sorry. They insisted on this so I couldn’t refuse them.”

The Prince said apologetically.

If you think you are sorry then please don’t call for me. I had promised to meet Maribel and Reina today, but when I excused myself from going, just how grave was it, since I was told in anger, “I don’t know the likes of you anymore!” And besides, by chance, was I just called over in order for them to confirm if I was really the Earth Dragon? I had thought that this was all about the matter with the messenger, how anticlimactic. What’s with this. Wasn’t this all just out of curiosity?

“Are you really a Dragon?”

“But I can’t believe this, you know. Is this that Earth Dragon?”

“Show me the evidence.”

Glaring gazes pierce me.

Please don’t speak all at once. I can’t take in a lot of words said all at once, I’m not Prince Shoutoku. (2) Even so, their hair color, physique, and the like, as well as their voices, they are all different, but I can’t discern them. (3) But ‘to discern them’, it’s like they are showing a bad example of a buzz session, just spouting whatever they want to say, and given that there are five people I don’t even know who’s saying what. Since I don’t even know their names then I’ll ignore them as I see fit.

When I directed a fleeting glance at the Prince, he was extremely troubled. He’s a Prince but he is still inexperienced. Probably because he is here in place of the king that’s down from illness, their opinion is more influential. And probably because there is also his blunder with the messenger incident, wasn’t that a complete loss of face. He gives the feeling of being a friend who is honest to a fault. But I, even so I still think that’s a good thing.

But since they have been saying ‘evidence, evidence’ nonstop since earlier, without being able to endure it, letting out a small sigh I open my mouth.

“Evidence, you say? If I show you some, what merit is there for me?”

I was so tense, but I’m glad that my voice I did not tremble. Let’s cover myself with a strong demeanor as much as possible.

I was so tense, but I’m glad that my voice I did not tremble. Let’s cover myself with a strong demeanor as much as possible. Since I seemed to be worried all over, it may be said that I took a challenging attitude at the right timing. Because they may be big shots or whatever but since I’m already fed up with them saying rude things and getting me involved, so from this moment I’ll start considering running away. Fortunately there’s a big window so I could escape outside from there.

“...What do you mean.”

“You seem to be talking on the premise that I am the said Earth Dragon. And, if I am that Earth Dragon, about which utilization you will give me, aren’t you, then—”

“And then? The Earth Dragon is the Holy Beast of this country. It is its duty to be in obedience for the sake of this country.”

They are interrupting what I say as if they have no interest in what I’m saying. Paying attention to what people are saying to the end is what is called manners. And. They’ve said the words I do not want to hear the most. Duty? That’s something that you decided for me by yourselves, isn’t it.

Since the tip of my patience storage is running short, let’s quickly think of something to calm me down. You know, like how to apologize to Maribelle. Because if I let myself be controlled by my emotions and end up shouting here maybe I won’t be able to continue to stay at the castle. I’m already at the degree of wanting to become a Dragon and to trample all over them. But if I end up doing that, it’ll be the end.

Compared to me who was worrying endlessly about such things, they still continued talking as before.

“It’s said you still haven’t formed a contract, so how about it, to choose someone amongst us?”

“That is great! I am too old but I will entrust this to my son.”

“Then it will be me. My house has vowed the most faithfulness to the country.”

“No, that said then it shall be Us.”

They took me being silent as proof and they proceeded to quarrel about the contract.

Contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract, contract.

I’m fed up with this already. Don’t they know that the reason I have stubbornly rejected the contract is because there are people like them who are obsessed with the contract? The pressure and the excessively heavy expectations. I just want to live in peace, that’s why I expressly came down to the human settlements, and am living this way.

Originally I thought it wouldn’t be good for me to appear in Dragon form in front of them, but now it’s too late to regret it. If the surrounding pressure is so heavy, it might be the moment to run away from here. To fly towards a place where nobody knows me, and to start over from scratch.

... But, if I did that then I’d leave too many lingering affections in this castle. Even if I’m backbitten for it, if there’s a place I belong to, then I want to continue to stay here. That’s my wish now.

As I remain silent, they keep on arguing violently, saying, 'me,' 'no, me,' 'I'm better.'

Is it because he can't stop the quarrel? The Prince was heaving a sigh. Seems it's useless for me to have expectations of him. No choice but to somehow do something on my own.

Once again I change the structure of my throat, and gave them a roar that made my throat sore. Putting in it all of what I'm feeling right now, I howl a yell at them with all of my strength. The air trembled, as well as the room itself, even the chandeliers that are hanging from the ceiling and the window's glass shook. And even the tea cups that were placed on the desk let out the sound of getting cracked. It surely resounded throughout the castle.

After yelling I feel a little refreshed, but my throat hurts. I cleared my throat several times before facing them, and they were looking at me wide eyed, as if thinking 'even though she looks like that.'. Their gazes contained surprise and awe, and some also contained expectations.

"That now was my evidence. ...However, I'm sorry, but I decline to form the contract."

Straightening my back, pulling up my chin and fixing my gaze on them, I clearly state my real feelings. I don't know how important these people are in this country, but I just don't want to yield on these feelings. I am not open mind enough to stick up to you in this contract matter.

They scowl at my words.

"You don't want to form a contract...?"

"That's stupid!"

"What is this. As the Holy Beast of the country —!!"

"Won't you wait for a moment?"

As I was bracing myself to be yelled at, the only one who hadn't joined the dispute opened his mouth for the first time. His white hair and his face carver with wrinkles, make you think he is well into his years, yet those blue eyes are shining so clearly that they won't fall to those of the younger people. Those pupils, turned towards me.

"Miss Vito. Please forgive our discourtesy."

"Orlando, why do you stop us! If this is the Holy Beast of Our Country then it's duty is determined."

Lord Orlando seems to be a little different from the other men. And although everyone is silent when Lord Orlando spoke, as if his words have more influence than the others, there was only one person who lunged forward. (4)

"Certainly for Our Country the Earth Dragon is the Sacred Beast. Without their help, in

successive wars would not have been won, would they. ...This may be rude, but may I ask for your age?"

"I'm 16."

Probably. I don't know the exact details, but I believe that's about it, thinking objectively. If the younger brother from my human memories is a middle school student, then I should be older than that. (5) A high school or college student. But thinking on the basis of my mental age, then I believe I should be in high school. Because I know I have a stubborn side, as well as a selfish side, and even a childish side.

Lord Orlando stares at me with kind eyes, saying, "Is that so."

"If you are sixteen then that matches the ages of our children and grandchildren? Won't you give it a thought? Saying it's their duty, would you recruit your own young children and grandchildren to go to war, and even the female ones?"

"However, humans and Dragons are—!"

"Humans and Dragons are the same. It doesn't change the fact that they are alive."

The others seem to be dissatisfied as they are collecting wrinkles between their brows.

"The incident with Tommaso Sommer which occurred a few days ago was also the same. As result of a retainer who acted only out of his own self-interest, she was made to suffer through a fearful experience. It ought to be sufficient for us that she still remains at the castle. To expect any more than that is mere arrogance."

What is this, I might fall in love with Lord Orlando. To think a person who would say such things for my sake would exist.

"That was responsibility of Tommaso Sommer alone! And he even received the appropriate punishment. That is completely unrelated to us, isn't it."

The youngest one, well, this person has probably just passed his sixtieth, has been charging at Lord Orlando since earlier. When Lord Orlando directs a sharp glare towards him, he shuts his mouth with a wince.

"Have you already forgotten? Didn't we previously forced an Earth Dragon to form a contract, and ended up killing it?!"

"... That matter should have been dismissed as an accident."

"There were too many mistakes on our part for it to be called an accident, were there not?"
(6)

There is nobody else who flared up at Lord Orlando after that. I had also gotten surprised at those words. That was a breathtakingly shocking truth.

— Killed the earth dragon? It was dismissed as an accident? Too many mistakes on your part?

“... What does that mean?”

I asked involuntarily. Lord Orlando faced me with sad eyes.

Did this mean that there was another Dragon here before me, and that it was killed by an accident or some other reason?

“...This is something known only to us, but let's talk about it.”

“This is a state secret, you know.”

“This child has the right to know.”

After a soft groan, they keep silent.

Is it, probably because it was an Earth Dragon, the same as me? If it's something only they know, I wonder if it's fine for me to hear it. But, as the feeling of wanting to know was strong, I remained silent.

Confirming that nobody had something to say, Lord Orlando began to talk.

“It has been 20 years since then. Within a very distant forest an Earth Dragon child was found. Maybe because it was still a child it was not too ferocious, and we were easily able to take it under our protection. And it was brought up in secret. Of course its contractor was decided at that time. We were surprised by the fact that the Earth Dragon's thinking was closer to humans than to the other Dragon species. When it became an adult it could also take on human form. And when it finally became the time to form the contract, ...that Earth Dragon rebelled against us. ”

I wonder if it had no parents. Well, in the first place it might have had no thing called a 'family.' I heard that the Earth Dragons appear suddenly, that they appear when Alvina Kingdom goes through a crisis, isn't it a convenient system for a country from this world, ...I don't want to believe that nor can I believe it.

“Due to our impatience we forced it to form the contract. And, it ended up dying ... the contractor as well, was a victim and died.”

Lord Orlando cast down his sad eyes. I wonder if it was also an unpleasant event for them, there were also other people who had downcast faces.

—It ended up, dying. If so then I ...am that child's replacement, I wonder. Etc. Although it was 20 years ago, it would have been able to participate in the war with Tiruzoto Country if it was alive now. Because that Earth Dragon disappeared, I showed up in his instead. ..Such an excessive story.

“Then we knew for the first time. That if they are not linked by strong ties to the contractor, the contract can’t be formed. So we will not be able to enforce you to make a contract.”

Because if I’m forced to do it, I will die. ... This was the first time I heard of this.

To die, huh. Thinking about it now I have never thought much about dying. Also, perhaps because I’m a Dragon, there is a side of me that was looking down on it, thinking there’s no way I’d die. (6,5) Humans are, unlike Dragons, weak creatures, and I have never thought I would die by making a human my opponent. But, I might still die.

And then I’ve always thought it was weird. If they really meant to then they could trap me in jail, then force me to make a contract and take me to war. But they did not do it, so I just noticed that I believed there should have been some circumstances. The truth is that they certainly wish for me to form links with this country even if they have to confine me in a cage. And they surely had many ways to do it, they just had to procure by any possible mean a human for me to contract with, yet, I wonder if the reason they didn’t do this, was because they harbored some small sense of guilt towards the Earth Dragon that died.

“I do think that I also want you to lend your strength to the human beings that live in this country, if possible. However, as for the contract, for the Earth Dragon as well as for the human, it’s something that will haunt them for a lifetime. I’d like you to think about it properly, before taking any action.”

When Lord Orlando closed his mouth, the room was enveloped by a curtain of silence. (7)

I was just standing there unable to believe those words. They had been quarreling so much but now they had all become quiet, and even the Prince had cast his eyes down.

I am at this castle because of my own will, not for this country’s sake.

But the Prince, for his country’s sake, by being honest to a fault he ended up falling in a trap; yet I’ve seen his franticness so I know. That he really loves this country. Lord Orlando and the rest, the people at this castle and the people who live in this Alvina Kingdom and that have heard the rumor, they certainly hold a little bit of expectation towards me. Unmistakably, the one who to cast that aside and not to make a contract was me. I decided that not minding if I caused trouble for others or if someone ended up hurt.

— So, I considered it for a bit.

About why I, do not wish to form a contract.

Because I hate to be tied down, because I don’t want to succeed the country’s duty, because the expectations are too heavy, all of it are only my own feelings. Perhaps, the reason I don’t want to establish the contract so obstinately, is because I have no backbone? Not wanting to be swept around, and not wanting to walk the established rails as the successive generations of Earth Dragons have done it, carrying thoughts akin to those of an adolescent child. Thinking only I am different, thus behaving like an antagonistic oni. (8)

I wonder if that's the reason, that by listening to Lord Orlando's speech, I have come to doubt my own feelings.

'Cause, I don't know if I can really save the country even if I form the contract.

So your expectations trouble me.

— I want to fly away, throwing this all aside.

Translator's Lair~

Vito's roar is made of Awesomeness, i swear.

(1) unsure about this~ 立った事ないけど。 (tatta koto nai kedo)

(2) shoutoku prince – “Legends also say that Prince Shotoku could listen to 10 people talking to him while reading, and correctly restate what each one said.” <https://jklr.net/2011/08/18/prince-shotoku-the-man-the-myth/> a note in English this time! :D uhm, and Wikipedia for people who may like to read more: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Sh%C5%8Dtoku (in English, too!)

(3) not discern them – 見わけが付かない – (miwake ga tsukanai) = undiscerning. almany dict. – another note in English... I'm gonna cry from happiness! Next line actually starts with (miwake ga tsuku – discernible.)

(4) figuratively. Couldn't think of a word to replace it with xD

(5) for those who still don't know, or get confused since things in your country may be different: education levels in Japan.

—1st to 6th grade: elementary school (6-12 years old, approximately.) written as 小学校 (shou gakkou) 'little school' xD so kawaii

—7th to 9th grade: middle school (13 to 15 years old, approx.) written as 中学校 (chuu gakkou) 'middle school'.

—10th to 12th grade: high school (16 to 18 years old, approx) written as 高校 (koukou) 'high school.'

So Vito's saying, since her younger brother was in middle school, (and she was kinda looking down on him as if she was a level higher) then she should be at least 16. Some random info: https://www.tokyo-icc.jp/guide_eng/educ/01.html (they have only one month of vacation, omg, poor children.)

(6) ...Wild guess!! :D 事故と言うにはあまりにも我らに落ち度がありすぎた、そうだろう？

(6,5) taka wo kukutte –高をくくって – to belittle something while thinking it's not a great deal (also to be within one's estimation.) Goo dict. (jp)

(7) 'the stillness visited the room with a 'shin' sound' ... xD しんとした静けさが部屋に訪れた。

(8) 'like an Ama no Jaku.' 天邪鬼のように。Ama no jaku can mean a perverse person, but I thought it was more fitting if I left it more literal. NJ Star: (1) perverse or cussed person; contrarian; (2) antagonistic demon in Japanese folklore; (3) demon under the feet of temple guardian statues.

Chapter 31 – part 2

After that, we didn't speak of anything. Even if someone tried to talk about something, everyone would fall silent immediately. I wonder if the death of that Earth Dragon weighed down on them to that extent.

By saying, 'can I go now?,' I left that room as if I was fleeing.

When I closed the door and stood still in place, I noticed someone's presence at the side; as I turned towards it, for some reason the Captain was leaning against the wall. Confirming that I had left the room, he distances himself from the wall that supported him and stood right in front of me.

Did he come to pick me up?

... I wonder why. Just by being near him makes my heart feel at ease. He looks delicious as always, but recently I haven't had that kind of feelings towards him.

"The contract, what is it supposed to be?"

Before I noticed, that was leaving my mouth.

"If I formed a contract, what would happen to me?"

"...Several generations of Earth Dragons have acquired great power. Their contractors as well, I have heard that they obtained enormous amounts of magical power and strength."

"So that's how they won those wars."

He placed a hand to my cheek, lifting my lowered face. His pupils, carrying a worried tint, appear and disappear under his bangs. (1)

"What are you thinking of?"

"That's why, it's about the contract. If I was to form a contract with someone from this country, like the Prince, for example. Then, after winning, what? It's said I can't be apart from the contractor. Thus I cannot be apart from the Prince. If we did that, I wonder how we should go on living after that."

That a bond is necessary to make the contract, could it be in consideration of the fact that

we must live together with that human afterwards. Such a dependable rule. But if a wrong step is taken then the Earth Dragon and the human will both die. There's no doubt this is a dangerous bridge to cross. (2)

"You want to contract with LeBlanche?"

"No, that's not it...? Why are you getting angry?" (3)

"I'm not angry. But, Vito, you should just do what you want to do."

That's a lie. Somehow, his facial expression is stiff, and his voice is low.

I wonder, maybe he doesn't like the idea of me contracting with the Prince? They seem to be childhood friends, what, he just doesn't want me to take the Prince away from him? (4)

"Then the Vice-Captain, or Sir Lance."

"...I don't want to think of it."

Wrinkles appear in between his eyebrows. As I say 'then who would be good?', I end up laughing spontaneously. Because somehow, I become relaxed when talking to him; just by being by his side I feel relieved and at ease.

Really, why is he so kind. That's all I think about lately.

"Captain, why are you so sweet to me."

"Because I like you."

"Is that so, — eh?"

At the reply I never expected my voice trembled. (5)

Eeehrrr, of course that's a regular LIKE rather than LOVE. (6)

He had no longer a sullen look on, his mouth is drawn in an arc as if something is amusing. He's making fun of me after all, I knew it.

But, he says in a very gentle voice.

"I like you, so I'm sweet towards you, I like you, so I want to treat you gently, I like you, so I want you to be by my side."

I'm sure my face is being dyed of a bright-red, apple-like shade.

— Dododo, don't go repeating 'likelike' like that! The Captain has been strange lately. Weird, his actions, speech and conduct are weird enough to think he has one or many screws loose! And besides I'm also bewildered at my own reactions.

He became audacious to this extent after he discovered I was a Dragon. I believe we wouldn't be having this sort of interaction if he still thought I was human. It would end with me being the girl he is interested in. It's natural he would be interested in me. Because I don't have prejudice towards black and Dragons like the people of this world. If such a person existed he would obviously be interested. That's the reason I can't accept his words. Because, I'm different from the human beings of this world. It's no good to have expectations of this.

"Tha, that's no good. If you're gentle to me, I will end up relying on you. I will become dependent." (7)

"That would make me happy."

I'm not fine with it!

I'd hate to come to rely on someone and become dependent of them, as if I had become weak.

You can't live by yourself, you can go on living because there are other people to cooperate with. That's the good point of humans, but unfortunately I'm a Dragon. Somehow I've been living alone by my own strength until now, and also have dealt with several sparks of danger by myself. (8) Rather than that, my feelings of wanting to be depended on are bigger. Because I can clearly tell, that even if I'm called manly, that by being relied on I can feel that I'm needed. (9)

— 'Aah, it's fine for me to exist over here.' I can think that.

Since the two of us were caught in an awkward silence, the Captain laughed and said, 'let's return.' After all, it seemed he did come to pick me up.

I'm honestly happy. Since the room is inside of this very castle, in fact I was worried, wondering if I could go back or not. He accompanied me back to Maribelle's room, but sending him away with just that would be bad, so I decided to bring out some tea.

At first I wondered if tea wasn't something expensive, but as it seems that the general public can acquire it by a cheap price then as a rule it's not something difficult to obtain. As Maribelle likes fragrant teas, or rather than that, she likes something closer to black tea, there are various kinds of black teas arranged on the shelf. She told me to drink from them as I like, so I'll borrow from those. Furthermore, there are sweets. These confections are seriously delicious. There is something akin to candy within the biscuit's dough and I can't resist it. By the way, Maribelle is in the middle of work. I can't deny that lately I've been feeling like a NEET. (10) I also feel like wanting to return to work, yet I'm maintaining the status quo since I don't know what to do. What are the things I'm capable of doing right now, I wonder.

I'm glad I was taught how to behave like a proper lady for the time being. (11) As I calmly take my time to place these on the table, my tense mood relaxes.

...But, well, I'm hungry. It's not hunger as a human, but hunger as a Dragon. Speaking of which, a lot of things have happened lately so I haven't eaten any humans. But I think that under the current circumstances I should not go out to eat so, —should I decide on the nearest person?

"Captain, I'm hungry."

When I say that as a joke, the Captain, who had been tasting the black tea in an elegant gesture, silently brought out his right arm, so I ended up laughing. How should I put it, even the manner in which he drinks black tea looks good. Just like an image in some painting.

When I said, 'it's a joke,' I ended up making him worry, for he replied, 'really?' The fact that half of it was truth let's keep it to myself.

Then, I was surprised to be asked about how often I eat humans. Do you normally ask such things? It's like asking a girl what is the amount of rice she usually eats, but since he is such a matchless Dragon-lover I wonder if he's asking out of curiosity. I answered obediently.

"I guess about three people a month, but if they were rich in magic power then just one or two would be enough."

Better yet, if it's the Captain I'm sure even a little would suffice, as his left arm satisfied me quite a lot.

At any rate, it's ridiculous to talk about for how long I can make a food reservoir out of this person in front of me. (12)

"Have you eaten this month?"

"...Nope, I guess that it was just your blood and hair."

"Then"

I'm telling you not to pull out your right arm! My previous self might have eaten it up with sparking eyes, but my current self doesn't feel like doing that. I want to eat it, but feelings of guilt spring forward far stronger than that. And — he's a person I don't want to lose, I believe. Actually even if it was only one of his arms, the current me can't eat it. Good grief, I don't understand how my mental state has changed at all.

I sigh at the Captain who still hasn't retracted his right arm, yet his good will makes me happy.

So, I laugh.

"People can't live without arms and legs, can they, and it's also troublesome to replace them, so if you are going to give it to me, instead of your flesh — won't you give me your blood?"

Blood will also increase again over time, and it is not an exaggeration to say that blood is the body's energy source. It also left me quite satisfied when I got some the other day.

She I say that, this time he opens the collar of his uniform and bares his neck. I think the back of his neck is too white and thin for a man, but his Adam's apple is properly there. ...It's erotic somehow.

...What? Wait a minute. Huh? N, No way, am I going to get it from his neck? Whawhawhawhat, like a vampire. — Well, you know, though I do have protruding fangs, you know, I am not a vampire, I'm a Dragon, in no way could I possibly suck the blood from your neck or something, because there's no way!

Even though I was just planning on making a small cut on his arm and pouring it into a glass or something.

At some point he stood up and grabbed my arm, making me stand up from my chair, but we have a height difference of about 20 cm.

"It's impossible since you're tall."

Ah, I'm glad. With this I can take it from his arm without feelings of constrain. However, this time I'm being led by his arm as he walks to the bed, and sits down, then pats the place at his side with a 'pon pon' sound. ...'Sit here,' is what that means, I guess.

Even if you say 'sit,' I might reach better if I kneel on the bed. ...It might be better if I give up on getting the blood from a different place. The Captain looks like he has an obstinate side or something.

Reluctantly I kneel next to him, and timidly place a hand on that neck.

The person himself is saying it's fine. And besides now is not the time to be feeling embarrassed...! Probably.

"... Your neck, I might have to bite it."

"Yeah, that's fine."

— Oh I get it already. I'll take it. Please let me have it.

Getting out of the way the bright green unruly hair that is stuck to his neck with my hand, I slowly bring my face closer.

As I was hesitating over if this is really OK, a hand attaches itself to the back of my head and brings me closer to the base of his neck. I transform my canines into a sharp form, and with a gnawing sound, I sink my teeth into his white skin. Arterial blood is richer in certain nutrients so I like it more, however since I don't know about the human body's structure, for the time being I take into my mouth this flowing blood.

Uugh, it's very difficult to drink from the neck. The arm would have been better after all. Vampires are great, huh.

Blood is flowing, but it's just two holes of about 5mm each. They get clogged soon. If I don't attach my lips closely around the wounds without any gaps, and like milk suckling baby, desperately suck the blood out from the torn down blood vessels, then none comes out. While trying to prevent that his clothes become tainted by the blood flowing from his neck, I continue to drink until I become satisfied. A rich taste of iron. But to me it's sweet, and on its path from my throat and through my whole body it overflows and permeates me with a pleasant feeling.

—It satisfies me.

He continued to gently stroke my hair.

Recently, since all he does is stroke my hair, I've been thinking 'am I some kind of pet?'

Surely, doesn't this feel like you're feeding your pet leeches? (13)

As I thought of that, it is needless to say that I became depressed on my own.

Chapter 32

The mentality on the days before the war. An unclear truth.

Third, DREAM.

“Neechan, are you sulking in a corner again?” (1)

“Leave me alone.”

“...Geez, to be feeling hurt for every little thing like that, you won’t get anywhere, will you.”

“I mean, it’s like you’ve come to refute me, I hate that.” (2)

“Ouch. I’m telling you not to lash out at me. It simply hurts.”

“You won’t understand it, ***”

“It’s because I don’t understand that I’m asking—”

“Of course, after all you and me are different human beings, aren’t we.”

“Are you someone who says ‘different human beings’ but means ‘separate people’? ...Aren’t you sulking too much, neechan.” (3)

“Leave me alone.”

“Yes, we went back to the beginning. ...But, whatever happens, call for me next time, ‘cause I’ll properly help you.”

“You’re the younger brother yet you’re so cheeky. And what’s with that, are you oniichan’s Manager?” (4)

“Ask for my help through telepathy! I’ll go pick you up!! Is what that means.”

“...”

“Ah, don’t ignore me! Please don’t ignore me! I’m super-embarrassed!”

“Don’t say it if it’s embarrassing.”

“Oh, you finally laughed.”

“...ngh.”

“You’ve always been making a boring face so you live hesitantly; laugh more. They say that ‘good fortune and happiness will come to the home of those who smile,’ right?” (5)

“However, oniichan is hiding in the corner of that corridor and looking this way.”

“Whoa-!? What are you doing niichan!”

“Ye, yeah! Hahaha! Such a chance meeting!”

“It’s not a chance meeting.” “No way it’s a chance meeting.”

As I open my eyelids there’s the familiar canopy as a ceiling. When I lift my body the sunlight coming in from the gap in the curtain informs me it’s morning.

Recently I’ve been frequently seeing dreams from when I was human.

Lord Cleric had said something like “it will be your end when you remember all of your human memories,” nevertheless at this pace, aren’t I going to dream and remember everything at some point? Thinking that gives me a scary feeling.

I wonder what it means for it to be my end.

“...What do you actually want me to do.”

I don’t feel good, it’s like someone is intentionally showing me these dreams. Although previously such a thing didn’t happen at all.

I heaved a sigh and combed backwards the bangs that were stuck to my forehead with sweat, when I heard the peaceful breathing of someone sleeping; as I glance over there, Maribelle was sleeping. Her face is facing towards me and she’s sleeping rolled into a ball like a cat. My stiff face loosens up at her cuteness.

I wonder if I’m the only one who thinks that her face without make-up is cuter. (5)

From her small mouth, she spills in her sleep talking, ‘Vito I like you a lot,’ and I felt so much joy and embarrassment that my face became red.

My depressed mood was swept away and became a warm feeling.

This time, 'Reina, don't eat thaaat... you'll ruin your stomach,' she mumbles in a murmur.

"What is she dreaming of."

I ended up laughing.

The inside of the castle was silent till the point of being eerie.

The castle town visible from outside of the window too, even though it's always crowded with people, now not even a person is in sight.

— The war is starting.

As if the peaceful day-to-day was a dream, the air tingles; everywhere it's filled with tension.

At the corridor near Maribelle's room, as I was watching the castle town from the window where it can be seen without obstruction, the sound of footsteps reached me.

Directing my gaze towards it, Madeleine was there. She stopped walking in front of me, laughing with a sweet smile.

"It has been a long time, Vito. I wonder how many weeks has it been."

"...It has been a while, Madeleine."

The same honey-colored long hair as Chiffon is tied as dumplings at her back, she isn't wearing the usual servant uniform, but she is dressed in an unfamiliar garment with a complex visage, with a light purple basis. And at some places there are patterns applied in golden embroidery, it can be seen that she is a magician at a glance.

Her smile is the same as always, but there seems to be some tension somewhere. Is that because the war is starting soon, or is it my fault?

As I inquire about her attitude, she laughed at me with a giggle.

"I'm all right. I am not feeling oppressed because you're a Dragon. And you are the Holy Beast of this country, you should be more proud."

The Holy Beast of the country. I didn't want to hear that from Madeleine's mouth, but when thinking of the matters at her house then surely that can't be helped.

"The King is calling for you. ...I was meant to tell you that, but since this would only put a strange pressure on you, I declined in your place, I came here to inform you of that."

At last the King has summoned me himself, I had already put myself on guard, but I felt let down at those words.

"That can be done? He, he's the king."

"Just who do you think I am, I'm the next head of the Morante family! Well I'm still a fledgling, thus of course I asked Father and he declined in our place."

She even controls her step-father? In truth Madeleine is unusually talented, and her thought process is fast, to the point it makes you wonder if she's really Chiffon's twin. (6) To the point, it would be kind of scary if she became an enemy. But is the Morante House such an influential noble family? Although I'm interacting with Madeleine like normal, in fact isn't she an ojou-sama with a higher social standing than the noble daughters from around here?

"Without a doubt the King is one of the people on the Prince's side. He's intending to send you out to the battlefield by any means."

"He wants to send me out to war..."

The King is thinking of this country, just like the Prince and those people. They have some self-interest, but if their country is destroyed they'll lose the place they belong to. So in order to protect the country, they will be desperate no matter what has to be sacrificed for it.

"That's all from me, well, I have preparations to make so see you."

It truly was only a report. Madeleine turns her back to me and walks away.

Before, every time we met in the hallway, we would make some small talk and get all excited, I remember with some loneliness.

— And, am I really okay with this?

Am I okay with being just a spectator?

I used to think that I was unrelated to those people who fight wars. No, I wanted to think that. To begin with, I am neither a native of Alvina Kingdom and, as someone with incomplete human memories, I thought it would be impossible for me to help the humans. But, it is too late for this now that the war is upon us, but, I think.

I wonder, why am rejecting them this much?

If my *raison d'être* as an Earth Dragon is to be here and fulfill my duty as per the expectations of those men, then I should gladly proceed forwards and fight. And I'm also

confident of having the power to kick about a lot of humans. To kill a lot of human beings, and to go down to posterity as a hero. Most things will proceed smoothly if I did so.

When I was holed up in the Vizannu mountains, I witnessed that thing called war once. They were different from me, but now I know that people were riding Fire Drakes, but as I thought it was strange for people to be riding Dragons I lost to my curiosity and followed along. I called it a war but it was a small-scale battle. Still, I remember it was something dreadful. To the point, I, I felt scared.

—Yes, I am probably, afraid of war.

Even though I am a Dragon that has killed countless humans, even I am astonished about this. But at war people will die at a ratio incomparable than up to now. So I could not agree with them who say ‘let’s go to war.’ I was thinking, ‘why I do I have to bother with such a thing?’

I could not believe it, that I could lead them to war.

I just, wanted to stay as a bystander.

To shake my head as this doesn’t have anything to do with me, to close my eyes to this as I have been doing it until now. That would be enough for me.

... However, perhaps I closed my eyes much too long.

I have noticed somehow that I can’t be a bystander anymore. I ended up getting involved too deeply in this.

How much has my existence affected this country? And how many troubles have I brought them? They are endless no matter how much I count them.

... And this timing is almost too good. It is like some invisible power was working, and created an existence like me. Because of the unexpected events that caused the death of the Earth Dragon from 20 years ago, that invisible something made preparations for something else. And because it was in a hurry it finished it by creating an existence that was a mix up of a human and a Dragon.

I cannot help it, to have such a feeling.

But, still. Even though I was dropped and came into existence over here because of a third party.

I believe, it’s probably wrong for me to keep running away from this already.

From this world.

“Wait...! Madeleine!”

When her retreating back stops at my call and she turns around to look at me, I run to her

side. We weren't that far apart so it didn't take too much time.

I take a deep breath once, and stare straight at Madeleine.

"—Take me with you."

A moment passes, Madeleine's eyebrows frown. She heaved a small sigh as if she thought this wasn't a very good idea.

"I wouldn't really recommend that. If you approach the frontlines then it may be seen by the surrounding people as if you are willing to participate in the war. Even if that's not your will, that's why I'd like you to not take too many rash actions."

"Even so, that's fine."

She opens her eyes wide in surprise.

"Somehow I don't understand your change of heart, but... are you really okay with it?"

I just kept staring at her honey-colored irises. She was gazing into the depths of my pupils with a serious expression like she was trying to perceive what I'm thinking.

We stared at each other for a while, but Madeleine broke the silence with a wry smile.

"...I say, as a friend I wanted to say that, but as the next head of the Morante Household, what I really think is that I want you to come by all means."

It should be like that. Madeleine has a family, and many things she wishes to protect.

I do not know how much war potential I can have, but certainly, for her there doesn't exist something happier than if I went out to the front lines and truly lead the country to victory.

"I think you already know about this, right, Vito? Our country is very sweet to you guys, the Earth Dragons. Maybe it's because of the one which was forced to form a contract and died, but this time you're being treated with utmost care so that you won't die, and there's a feeling of respecting the will of the person in question... that's something very convenient for you."

If they hadn't met that Earth Dragon, then now I may have not even been able to make decisions on my own will.

"In my case, though it was ultimately my own will to enter the Morante Household as an adopted child, I wonder if maybe I wanted to become a magician, but frankly a side of me doesn't know that, even if I could say that now. So, I'm envious of you who still has options left. ...It's fine if you don't hurry up and make the decision right now, you know? Or rather, do you really want to go?"

Smiling sadly, she says. 'To head with us to war, or to only watch over the war until the end while remaining at the castle.'

I think to remain at the castle and watch over the war until it ends is the best for me. Because while I may fear that the castle may be attacked when I am inside, my body itself will be safe. Or I could flee to somewhere else, discarding this country. ...At first I thought so. But, it is too too late now.

I quietly nodded.

“Are you really okay with it? Do you really want to go?”

With a sigh Madeleine asks again.

But my feelings have already been decided.

“I was, ...always thinking that this was unrelated to me. A side of me was also rebelling against the weight of the expectations from the surroundings. I always thought, it’ll be fine as long as I myself am alright.”

“That’s fine, you know? That’s a matter of course as a living creature. In particular, because you’re not a human being, it’s natural to think the most about your body as per your instincts.”

Not a human being. But nor can it be said that I’m a perfect dragon. That’s a matter that causes me torment.

“But, I can’t let things pass by like this.”

“Is that because of compassion? If that’s the case, then please think that that’s something that we, who are intending to battle while risking our lives, won’t appreciate.”

I wonder if she’s becoming tense, her words are coming out more straightforward than usual.

“...It might be. But I am the same as them. I have a great lingering affection towards this country. (7) I do not want to escape and throw all of that away. I don’t know how terrible war is, nor how many people will die, now if I can stand on the battlefield without any hesitation... but, I want to protect these lingering affections. No matter if it’s even said that this is all just pretty words, this is better than escaping and being tormented by feelings of guilt.”

In the end, that I want to do it so that I won’t be tormented by guilty feelings, it’s such a terribly impure motive, isn’t it. And, after having rejected them so stubbornly until now and then changing my opinion 180° around in an instant, I could come off as such an indecisive guy. (8) Even I think so myself.

But, I’m afraid of losing everything that is here. More than anything, that’s what I’m afraid of.

“Please Madeleine, take me there too.”

Since she said these are preparations, probably that's why Madeleine is also going. Even is she's but what they call an egg, she is still a magician of this country.

Her sharp gaze pierces me. If I give in here then my feelings won't come across to them. As I was showing this attitude to her, she breathes a big sigh, and says, 'it can't be helped then.'

"...I understand. I understood your feelings properly. But, just remember this"

And she made such a serious face such as she hadn't made before.

"That if you disappear, there will be a lot of people who will be sad." (9)

If I die, I wonder if there will be humans who will grieve me. At least, I wonder if Madeleine, who said this herself, will mourn me.

I gave a small nod.

"Yeah, Okay. But the same goes for Madeleine."

"If you say that then I can't answer anything back."

The tingling atmosphere that persisted until now disappears, and she smiles as gently as always.

"Let us pray that the both of us can avoid that, so—, —you know."

"...Eh? What?"

Madeleine is saying something, but it's difficult to hear it. I ask again in impatience, wondering if my ears are working wrong, but now I didn't hear anything at all. On the contrary my field of vision began to blur in a rough manner like the screen of a television with lost signal. (10)

"—, —!"

"Wha, wha's this"

The face of a mystified Madeleine disappears as if buried under a sandstorm. (10) In the end everything became pitch black, and I didn't even know if I was still standing there.

It was a horrible sensation, a feeling as if I was suddenly thrown out to the space.

I see nothing. I feel nothing. Nothing, nothing.

— With a snapping sound, like the TV channel was changed from the empty signal screen, suddenly my field of view became clear.

Blinking several times, I noticed that Madeleine who should have been in front of me is not there anymore, so I look around in a panic. But let alone her not being there, I was not at the

place that I should have been right now.

“...Whe, re?”

My location was changed in an instant, it seems. That I use a phrasing as ambiguous as ‘it seems,’ is because I myself can’t understand what happened.

By the side of a wall in a relatively small room, I was sitting in a bed by the window. TV, bookcase, desk, closet, it could be said that I recognize but it makes me feel uncomfortable. At the edge of my vision I can see something black appear intermittently, so when I try grabbing it with my hand to look at it, it was black hair. It was a slightly long shoulder length haircut.

“Black, ...why?”

And now I stare at my hand, and maybe it was because of spending my summer vacations as a shut in, what enters my eyes is a hand which is comparatively white for a Japanese person. Moving my line of sight to my body, I was wearing pajamas of an orange checker. My appearance; that of light brown eyes, and a healthier, tanned skin. And I ought to have been wearing the dark blue uniform of a servant. Yet, even if I should feel out of place in this figure, there is no sense of discomfort.

When was it? I have felt this kind of sensation before.

— That was certainly, when I became a Dragon... no, when the Dragon became me? Huh? Eh? What the.

My memories are in a chaos and I don’t know from where I should start to remember things at all. As I was confused about what the hell happened to my body, suddenly there was the sound of a knock and the door which was at the end of the room opens.

“Neechan, wake up soo..., ah, how unusual.”

An unknown youth with blond hair came in to the room.

Wearing a pretty pink apron, and holding an egg in his hand. Who’s newlywed wife are you.

“If you’re awake then hurry up and go down. Niichan already ate and left for the company. If you don’t come down fast then I can’t clean things up, you know.”

He’s complaining to me while thrusting the egg at me.

Suddenly this newlywed-wife youth came out, and my head that was already confused just got even more confused.

“...Neechan? What’s wrong?”

Neechan.

That's it.

I, am an older sister.

Of this boy, I'm his sister.

—Wait a minute. This, what does this mean?

My Dragon memories which were so familiar to me are drawing back to the depths of my brain, and my human memories are coming out on top instead. I feel bewildered at this different sensation. I have memories, of this boy, and of my childhood spent in this house. Rather, the memories spent with my family as a human being are being clearly and vividly recalled. Better yet, I remember the events from last night as if they had happened just now. We fought over who would eat the extra hamburger that was made. But in the end we played rock-paper-scissors and oniichan ate it.

“Neechan?”

Since I wasn't saying anything, maybe he thought I wasn't feeling fine, the boy who is my younger brother makes a seemingly worried expression. Last week I caught a summer cold, it could also be because of that.

“Ehm, oh, ... no, it's nothing.”

“That so? That's good then. Don't force yourself. Come down quickly afterwards, if it cools down you'll have to reheat it in the microwave.”

“Y, yeah.”

The boy left the room with a dry laugh.

All of that, I wonder if it was a dream.

A dream where I became a Dragon. A dream of living in emotional instability from being caught in between the memories of a human and a Dragon and getting involved with a country and its war.

“Fantasy.”(11)

— ...It's that riiight, as I thought it was a dream riiight, there's no way something so fantastic isn't a dream. Ah ...I saw such a terribly realistic dream, I'll boast to oniichan next time.

Calming down with a sigh of relief I stand up from the bed. Just as I extend my hand to the closet thinking of changing my clothes before eating breakfast, that blur strikes my sight again.

“No, way..., w, wait.”

My field of vision became monochromatic and filled with the 'shhh shhh' sound of static.

(10) And not knowing where to stand I fall to the floor; then from the door from which my younger brother exited something came in in his place.

Whatever it is, help me, I say, and stretch my hands as if to cling onto something, and touch something soft. It was a fluffy hairball.

It cried out with a “Meow.”

—Oh, I forgot to feed Hana. (12)

“... — Vito!!”

“Wah, ye, yes!?”

The moment the static blur disappears and my vision becomes clear, my body jumps up by having my shouted closely by my ear.

Madeleine seemed to have been shaking me while holding onto both of my shoulders, and seemed lightly affected. I wonder what the heck happened.

“Wha, what’s wrong?”

Her amazed glare pierces me.

“That’s my line! You were standing there like you were dead, what happened? You showed no reaction no matter how many times I called, don’t scare me! I was about to call Lord Cleric already!”

Please excuse me from that.

“Like I was dead...?”

“There was no light in your eyes... I was worried because I kinda thought some sort of curse had been cast on you.”

No light in my eyes, am I a dead fish?

“A, a curse is somewhat exaggerated.”

“A colleague from the neighboring country has been cast that kind of spell before.” (12)

That’s scary. It’s as scary as a temple visit at 2 a.m. (13)

“I’m sorry, I was thinking of something for a bit.”

“...Really?”

Not even I am able to understand what happened just now. Returning to my human self, furthermore going to that world and speaking to my younger brother, I can’t believe it

myself. On the contrary there are also parts that I can't remember like they were enveloped in a haze. It's becoming ambiguous, like a dream, which doesn't hang on on time. (14)

I become a little scared. At the fact that the human memories I believed to be dreams, might be trying to become a reality.

But Madeleine seems anxious, and looks at me with a probing stare.

"Don't lie to me... your complexion looks bad."

"Really, I'm all right."

I hurriedly put on a smile.

"...Understood. This time, I'll leave it at that."

Although Madeleine did not say anything else, it seems she thinks my vague attitude is suspicious.

She probably discovered that I'm hiding something. But I don't know what to explain myself.

If I'll become confused just by saying it, then it is better not to say anything from the beginning.

Let's believe I saw a daydream.

Chapter 33

Memories in an irregular state are mayhem factors.

Madeleine says, women won't go to war unless they possess great power. And certainly. It would be weird to see a woman wearing a servant's uniform at the battlefield.

As result of thinking what to do about this, it was decided that I would go wearing the same outfit as Madeleine. When I ask if it's fine to wear it and look like a magician even if I can't use magic, she says with a laugh, 'it'll be alright if you just vaguely play along.'

Is this really alright?

We decided to just try getting me dressed for the time being.

"This one."

The clothes I was handed had a purple undertone. Because of its complicated structure I didn't know how to wear it, but I was able to put it on somehow while being instructed on how to. It somehow gives off a similar feeling to the outfit that Miss Leiya was wearing. Hers was simple, yet this one is too complex, including a large hood and several layers. However, more than anything, I want to wear trousers. Hers was simple, yet this one is too complex, including a large hood and several layers. However, above anything else, I want to wear trousers. You can sit cross-legged as much as you like, and can also walk in long strides and even do a handstand. Oh how great pants are.

But, there is only one setback.

"It doesn't suit me, hu-h..."

Confirming my appearance in a full-length mirror at Madeleine's room, I can't deny the feeling that I'm being worn by the clothes. (1) Although the size was more or less okay.

"Oh, is that so? It suits you splendidly. I think it's only because you never wear purple clothes that you feel it's strange."

"I wonder if that's how it is."

"That's how it is."

As I become sulky, Madeleine laughs. We're wearing the same clothes so what's with this

difference. Is it because of what must be called a magician's aura, I feel that I'm already losing starting from my atmosphere.

"Well, I have to go make a report for a little while, so wait for me here. For the time being I think that I'll try consulting about you with my Foster Father, is that alright?" (2)

"Yeah, as you see fit."

Sending-off Madeleine as she leaves the room, I look back again at the full-length mirror. Not matter how many times I see it I don't look good. Even changing the angle or trying a magician-like pose, it's useless. After all, I think the dark red clothes that I was wearing in the beginning are the ones that suit this face the most. More than this gorgeous costume, simpler and cutish clothes suit me better.

Thinking back now, perhaps eating this child was the beginning of everything. If I hadn't, I wouldn't have this appearance nor would I be here now. With another form, maybe I wouldn't even be in this castle. Although it is this late already, yet I'm having a sense of guilt for stealing and living the life of this human child. But I believe she became blood and meat and is living together with me. This is only me thinking of my own convenience, but other human beings are also the same. This is, the splendid food chain.

"So speaking of this child, I wonder what her name wa— ouch."

The moment I thought if she had a cuter name, suddenly a severe pain runs through my head, such as if thick needles were piercing me. I sit down since I can't remain standing because of the pain, but in turn my sight began to shake.

"This, means...!?"

I remember that at that time, when I was attacked by the daydream, I had a similar sensation. There was no pain, but all I could see faded and turned into black-and-white, and finally turned into a blurry sandstorm in which I couldn't see anything. (3)

And — with a snapping sound, my vision changed completely.

* * *

For me, dreams have 2 patterns.

"I wonder, where am I."

There patterns are, the dreams where I recognize that it's a dream, and the dreams where I

do not.

Although there are other varieties of dreams such as colorful, scary dreams and fun dreams, what's important to me is whether or not I am aware in them. And moreover, the dreams come with entirely different contents.

Even the dreams where I'm aware can be further split into two. In the case of scary and dreadful dreams, I am making preparations in advance and gradually looking for a method to wake up somehow by randomly repeating a trial and error system. And this is strange, but within those scary dreams there are many things which make me aware of it being a dream. Wake up, wake up, wake up, what do I do to wake up! ? Thinking only that, while escaping from the scary things. In case of seeing a fun, happy dream, within the dream I would go; 'ah, such a wonderful dream! If only I would never wake up!' while moving around, doing as I please.

The second type, where I don't recognize it as a dream, is almost like I am being washed away by the story in that dream.

For example, I am the protagonist of those stories. But the strange thing is, even though I'm the protagonist, there are cases where it even seems that I'm seeing things from an objective viewpoint. It's hard to understand, but if I have to compare it to something, then it's a feeling like my point of view is floating in a set place. (4) If I am to say it in an easier to understand way, then it's like the visual point you have in games when you move the protagonist from above.

And the bizarre thing is, that the me who is watching on; "the me who became a Dragon," never gets taken into either type of dream.

Even if I'm supposed to be aware, I'm not.

It's objective, and yet subjective.

"...Again, ...?"

When I opened my eyelids I was collapsed on the room's floor. Getting up and confirming my body, evidently it's my human self. I'm not that girl which I saw in the dream's full-length mirror.

The door was still open so I close it and then sit down heavily on the bed. I wonder how much time has passed since I fell, because by watching the clock hung up on the wall I can tell it's still morning, so I think not too much time has passed.

"Well then, I don't know which is a dream and which is reality."

The me right now can certainly say that this is reality, but my Dragon self within the dream believe that inside the dream is reality.

I don't know which is real, and which is fake.

Oh, my head is confused.

When I was groaning from being at my wit's end, a loud alarm resounds from my mobile on the bedside. I have an alarm clock but, I won't wake up with just one alarm so I also set up my mobile's. For it to ring at this time, I wonder if the snooze function was on. (5) When I tried to stop in a hurry by sprawling over the bed, I noticed I had an e-mail. It had arrived a few minutes ago, the sender was oniichan. As I open the e-mail while sighing, thinking that the content may be something bothersome again, the title was "AI LABU HANA." (6)

[Don't forget Hana's lunch! Today it was your turn. And I'm feeling lonely today too because you didn't send me off with a "Have a nice day, oniichan. <3"! (7) From time to time get up early, put on the matching frilly aprons I bought for you two and come to revitalize me while playing the music of hitting the frying pan with a ladle! (8) I also ask you to consider the option of sleeping together with me—"

"Breakfast, I forgot..."

I was having the feeling that I had forgotten something, so it was Hana's breakfast. In our house we have weekly turns for taking care of Hana. She's mostly affectionate with oniichan, but we decided that the whole family would take care of her.

The latter half, I ignore it as something trivial and just send back an 'understood' as a reply, and this time I stand up from the bed I was sitting on with the intention of changing my clothes.

"Eh?"

But a sudden lightheadedness doesn't actually cause me to sit back on the bed, but to collapse on top of it, and at the same time my field of vision becomes pitch black.

—Fa-thud.

From a distance I can hear the sound of clashing metal, sounds similar to explosions, and although faintly, human cries and screams. The bloody, uncomfortable atmosphere here is different from the castle's.

When I noticed, I was standing inside of something like a tent. Madeleine was by my side, there were also two other men in front of me. One is an uncle who seems to be 30-years-old. The other one was a young man.

"Madeleine, please call me immediately if anything happens."

They begin to leave the tent.

"Please take care, Foster Father."

She said 'Foster Father.' That is to say, the other man is her adoptive older brother? (9) ... Waiiit a minute. If you say that this man of short gray hair and tanned skin looks alike to someone, then isn't that someone the First Knight Corps Captain?!

"...Don't you have an Older Brother?"

"Take care, Foster Brother."

"'Foster' is not needed-" (9)

"Please leave quickly."

"..."

With grief hanging in the air, Madeleine's Foster Brother left the tent.

"Honestly, I want him to grow detached from me already." (Madeleine)(10)

I'm confused.

Even If I try to calm down, this is odd.

My head can't keep up with the situation.

Heck, what happened?

I, don't have any memories of it.

I remember up to the point where I got dressed in the same clothes as Madeleine. But after that I don't know the details of how I got here. I don't remember why Madeleine's Foster Father and Brother were visiting the tent we are in, nor what type of talk we were having. I understand from the situation outside that this place is close to the battlefield. However, there should still be a few days of time until I go to war. But in fact, my awareness was interrupted at Madeleine's room, then I saw a daydream, and at some point I arrived to the battlefield. Is there any way, to draw out this kind of memory?

"Don't be so nervous, but because the preparation phase this time was short, we will wait-and-see on the opponent. The full-fledged war surely is yet to begin."

"...Y, yeah."

Maybe my face was stiff, but Madeleine smiled at me as if to reassure me. But far from being tense, my head seems likely to short-circuit at these incomprehensible events.

But calming down and trying to think about it, I realized that there are also parts which I somehow remember. The fact that after that, Ariade and Chiffon, as well as Maribelle, found out that I was going to war and while we fought over this, one way or another I managed to persuade them. The fact that it was decided that for the time being they would tell no one that I was going to war. Because their expectations would trouble me. But, as I was told that I had to speak with the Top Management, there's the fact that I met and reported to those uncles and the Prince once more. The fact that we managed to talk over the quarrels, and that I was desperately chilling myself out. Vaguely, but there is another part that I remember as well. But I can't clearly say whether I experienced that or not. Because I only have the information but not a sense of reality from it.

Madeleine has been talking about something since earlier, but really, nothing entered my ears and even my line of sight was swimming about.

"Hey Vito, are you listening?"

"I'm sorry, again please."

She was amazed at me.

"There's no helping it. Listen properly because I'll say it again."

There's no helping it, Madeleine, I was wondering what on earth happened to my body, I can't not to be anxious and curious.

Ending our talk, we leave the tent and breathe the outside air. After calming down my faded memories return. Madeleine's Foster Father and Brother only came to give their greetings, I do not remember that it was a particularly important talk. For some reason her Foster Father ended up making an invitation, but I passed on it. He spoke passionately about his research and so on, but I was saved when Madeleine stopped him. By the way, her Foster Brother was a man of invective. He was terribly sweet to Madeleine though.

Is this whole surrounding area a camp, I wonder, as it is full of people who come and go. When I was staring at the situation with a lost air, I heard footsteps from nearby so I faced that way. Our lines of connect and we both make surprised expressions.

"...Why are you here."

I ended up being found out right away. I wore my hood right away but he certainly saw my face clearly when I had turned around.

"Long time no see, Sir Stefanos."

I met a troublesome person.

There is an unfamiliar woman next to Stefanos. She has a brighter red burning hair than him, and her muscular but slender physique may pass her as a man at first glance, yet one can determine she is a woman from the bulges at her chest. But, what she is wearing is the

characteristic Fourth Knight Corps' unique Dragon Rider armor and helmet.

"Oh, oh, such a lovely magician lady. I'm called Minette Duran. I wonder if you would let me hear your name?"

"It's Vito Tienu."

"Can I call you Vito? Please feel free to call me Minette."

"Eh, yes. Minette... san." (11)

Lady Minette approaches me and tends me her hand as if she is asking for a handshake. As I was wondering if it was a greeting handshake and placed my hand on top of hers, my hand was pulled and a light kiss was placed on its back. Surprised, I withdraw my hand and she says, "Cute," while showing a soft smile characteristic of a woman. She has a more gentlemanly atmosphere than Stefanos who is an advocate of women in a bad sense. A manly woman. She's such a cool person, it makes me want to call her Onee-sama. How should I put it, this is the first time I see a person kissing the back of someone's hand.

"Sister, what are you doing."

Stefanos, who came in between us as if to peel us off, looks at Lady Minette with a shocked expression.

Could it be, this person is his older sister who left with a "The world is waiting for me!!," I wonder. They are somewhat similar and he called her sister.

"Stefan is also such a shrewd guy. You have such a lovely child as an acquaintance, why didn't you introduce me to her."

"Because I had not heard a word from you and I didn't have any mean to contact you, right?"

"Oh, that's right. Sorry."

She's absolutely Stefanos' sister. No doubt.

"Rather than that, why are you here? We haven't heard anything about this."

As expected, he asked about it. As I was wondering if I would run into one of my acquaintances, I had actually gathered some resolution, but to run into one so quickly gives me the feeling that my initial momentum is being crushed.

"It's obvious you wouldn't know. If it was known that I came to the battlefield there would be chaos, right? So it has been kept in secret."

"No, so what I want to hear is, by who's will are you here."

Stefanos heaved a rare sigh. And with unusually serious, earnest eyes. The castle and the

battlefield, with the only difference being the location, I wonder if such a thing can change a person so.

“... It is my will.”

“That so, then I won’t say anything. Do your best not to die.”

How frank.

“Perhaps you’re worried about me?”

“‘re’s no way. ‘f something happens to you I’ll receive Captain’s anger burst. Tis’ honestly a fine trouble.” (12)

“Don’t know if he did it to release stress or the like, but he has been challenging me to matches saying he wanted to move his body. He could have picked on the Vice-Captain who was nearby, but why did it have to be me. Moreover, recently he has been using some sort of inhuman technique against me, you know?! Thanks to you my body’s full of wounds! ... Surely you, you didn’t do something to Captain, did you?”

When I got the point and my gaze shifted all over the place, I received a flick to the forehead. As I was holding my forehead since it was quite painful, Lady Minette stood in front of me in order to protect me.

“Stefan, what are you doing to a frail girl.”

“This fellow’s not frail though. She vomits fire, crushes humans by stepping on them and eats them, and can bend these thick iron bars, you know?! Just how is she frail!”

That’s certainly true, but I’m a girl as far as it goes (a female), so please I’d like you to refrain from saying it in a loud voice. Isn’t that like I was some savage gluttonous creature?

“...Oh!? No way, are you that Earth Dragon?!”

“Yes, apparently so.”

Apparently she was able to connect Stefanos’ words to me being a Dragon. While my interest was picked because she she thinks very fast, *grabs,* both my hands were caught and I was stared at by twinkling pupils.

“That’s great! Won’t you be my friend please?! I’ll also welcome you warmly if it’s fine with you to be more than friends!”

What’s with the more than friends.

“Sister stop it it’s embarrassing!”

“WHAT is embarrassing. I had told you that it’s no good to monopolize a pretty girl so hand her over to me as well, right?”

“So I’m saying it’s that what is embarrassing! Become interested in men rather than women already!”

“Just in what part of such filthy creatures do you want me to take an interest? Isn’t it obvious that sweet girls that are as cute and tender as flowers are way better than that?”

“It’s because you’re like that that you won’t receive a proposal to be a bride despite turning 25.”

“I will think about it if it is a girly man.”

A male maiden huh. (14) I understand. But I’m sorry for Lady Minette, because I feel such a child does not exist in this world.

Moreover, it’s unusual that Stefanos is being lead around. When I laugh at this, I ended up receiving another flick to the forehead.

Starting from my skin, that small pain echoes within my head, and suddenly my sight began to sway.

“No way, ...a-, gain?”

The figures of the two people in front of me become invisible when my field of vision becomes black as if China ink was spilled on it. I also can no longer hear the voices of the two people who had begun to quarrel again, and I was hit by a sense of floating in the air.

And — *bam,* I switched over.

— Was it because of the forehead flick...! ?

I loathe you, Stefanos.

Translator’s Lair~☆

(1) what the... I’m guessing she means the clothes feel so odd on her that it’s like she was inserted into the outfit. does that make sense? but it’s kind of a wild guess (‘ワ) 服に着られている感が否めない。

(2) Maddy calls him o-Gifu-sama = Lord Foster Father, more or less. and yeah, that’s awkward as hell in English, so you get a pretty ‘Foster Father’ :) お義父様 from now on, he will be referred to as such by her in this TL, but keep in mind she actually always calls him o-gifu-sama (/-`)

(3) sandstorm – when a tv screen loses its signal, becomes blurry with white and black dots and goes ‘shhh shhh’. i’m guessing this will pop up again and again and again in the future, so this is the last time I’m making a note for this xD

(4) wild guessing what fuyofuyo means cause nor jisho nor google-sensei know :C 'feels like my point of view is floating with a fuyofuyo'. it even sounds cute xD 例えていうのなら私の視点がふよふよと浮いている感じ.

(5) snooze – had to search for those cause I didn't know what it was called in English, hehehe. and voilá, I found a cute page which explains it – “Snooze” means sleep or nap. You can snooze or take a snooze. Most alarm clocks have a button that you can press when the alarm goes off, to make it wait a short time and then ring again. This lets you snooze a little longer in the morning, so it's called the “snooze button.” – the cute thing is, it then explains it in Japanese~ it's a page for MODAN INGURISSHU (modern English words & phrases xD) hsajshsushk why is that page so cute.

(6) I love Hana – AI RABU HANA, if it wasn't clear xD 「アイ ラブ ハナ」。

(7) I smell a sis-con here xD erhm, the note. he says 'HAaTO'. = heart. it probably means he pictured her making a heart with her joint hands. so I just replaced it with a <3.

(8) apparently for the Japanese it's a nice sound to hit a frying pan with a ladle... beats me. maybe I got it all wrong, but who knows? anyway, here the brother literally says 'to play' like one would 'play music'. フライパンとお玉の奏でる音で起こしに来てくれ !

(9) adoptive older brother: o-gikei-san, not oniichan u.u although the kanji for 'ani' is in there -> お義兄さん. he asked her to drop the 'gi' that makes her call him 'o-gikei-sama' and not 'oniisama', but she cuts him off (^▽^);;

(10) 全く、早く妹離れして欲しいわ Madeleine says 'imouto' instead of 'me' so I had a hard time guessing who she was referring to. Thanks to NUF users Nikko Anderson, xTachibana & Siceraria for their help with this sentence! >3<here to the thread! The sentence above this one also received help from xTachibana! also, poor guy. he was probably happy when he was told he was going to have an imouto. and the imouto treats him like this... talk about sis-cons.

(11) –san. She attaches san at the end after a pause, like she notices she really can't call her just by her name without an honorific. I have been replacing honorifics to a more western type until now, but can't here u.u

(12) did I mention before I hate how this fellow talks? Yes? xD んなわけねえだろ。お前に何かあったら俺が隊長に八つ当たりされんだよ。全く良い迷惑だぜ

(13) sorry sorry sorry sorry. but I had to make this note. Stefanos says, he was forced into sparring or something, but this 'to force' (in a completely different context) can also have the meaning of: “to pressure someone for sex; to woo; to make love to” (courtesy of Jsho) xD OMG. mind, stop iiiit. technically, if just the word 'shoubu' (match, contest, duel) wasn't in the sentence... the whole thing would be so... so...!! catvideoscatvideoscatvideos. ugh. I say, this is why it's bad that a fujoshi's translating this stuff. nothing can be a normal sentence anymore... ストレス発散か何かしらねえが、身体を動かしたいからと勝負挑まれんの。 ...actually the whole paragraph is horrible if you leave the shoubu word out. so horrible!! xD stefanos,

my view of you i-is changing so fast... and, c-captaaaain, why stefanos... “Don’t know if he did it to release stress or the like, but he has been pressuring me into sex saying he wanted to move his body. He could have picked on the Vice-Captain who was nearby, but why did it have to be me. Moreover, recently he has been using some sort of inhuman technique against me, you know?! Thanks to you my body’s full of wounds! ...[...] rofl hahahahaaha *drowning fujoshi* I really can’t stop laughing hahahahah

(14) otoko no musume – imagine a cute trap boy xD like totsuka saika, or hideyoshi... this chapter took such an odd turn over the latter part...

...I can certainly say that I’m happy I didn’t have to translate all about the war preparations xD (i wouldnt have survived another meeting with those geezers) but still, this was a BIT too sudden!!! I could drop here a sentence about next chapter and make your waits more tortuous but... gotta... hold... on...!! I won’t lose to my inner trooooll!! (ง๑`^๑)ง

Chapters 34 & 35 will be released together so that ch 34’s cliff doesn’t cause death by free-falling to some readers. This means it will take a bit more time for there being an update, but please bear with this, trust me, that is no cliff but a bottomless pit to the other side of the world, wherever that is for you :) (OK, I’m exaggerating things a bit.) See u hopefully soonish~

Chapter 34

The alarming plight which threatens an upheaval, and my circumstances.

My hand is touched by something warm and moist.

Opening my heavy eyelids and glancing over, a tawny hair ball was licking my hand.

“Ah- ...Hana?”

With a ‘Nyaa’, the tawny hair ball which is our home’s pet, Hana, drew closer to me when she noticed I was awake. While I stroke her throat charmingly, she lets out a pleased voice as she purrs.

“That too, was that a dream?”

When I’m within the dream I also feel that that’s a dream sometimes. Sometimes because of the colors, sometimes it’s just a sensation. (1) But, it’s still too realistic to be a dream. And it’s also strange that the me within the dream believes that this reality is a daydream. If this had happened only once then I’d certainly leave it at being nothing more than a dream. But as a consequence of repeatedly losing my consciousness and looking back at this reality as a daydream, I can’t help but feel that it is not possible to categorically assume this is a dream.

“Could it be I have some sleep disorder or I’m a sleepwalker. ...Hey, I’m not Heidi.”

Probably, I’m seeing these dreams because last night I was forced to listen to oniichan’s delusive tales. I’d like to think so.

At that instant, a certain mahou shoujo ringtone rings grandly, and panicking, I stretch over my bed to pick up my mobile. This embarrassing ringtone is not my own hobby, but by the time I noticed oniichan had set it up on his own accord. Because it’s too embarrassing I keep it in silent mode at school. By the way, the mail tone for my otouto is KaSASU’s and the one for my parents is the theme from Abarenbou Shougun. (2 -3) Even I think these are tasteless. But I like the impact they have.

The e-mail’s title is “PLEASE LOVE.” (4) Even without looking at it I can roughly guess the content so I close my mobile without reading it. And besides I can’t stay lying down forever. As I raised my my upper body Hana got on my lap. She claws at my legs with a scratching sound like she’s demanding something, and inclining her neck in a classic tilt, she looks up to me. Too cute.

“Ah, that’s right. Your breakfast, right, I’m sorry, after I change my clothes I’ll immediately —”

When I tried to stand up I was attacked by a sudden dizziness and collapsed onto the floor. As I was enduring the pain of hitting my face against the floor, Hana anxiously came to snuggle against my cheek but, just like that — with a poof, my consciousness was interrupted.

Again?

**

This time I was standing at the battlefield rather than at the tent. By my side was Madeleine, sporting a quiet countenance.

“The enemy side looks odd. I wonder what’s the meaning of that.”

To me it’s me the one who’s odd. I wonder what’s the meaning of this.

I have the sensation that my memories are being fast-forwarded in an intermittent manner. And I keep seeing again and again daydream-like things like back then. I don’t know which is a dream and which is real.

Heck, I wonder what is happening to me.

Are the human memories mine? Or do they belong to the girl from the daydream? Are her and me the same person? Geez, I don’t understand. However, the me from the daydreams simply owns memories of being human, which is to say, she doesn’t have a mixed-consciousness of a Dragon like I do. I can’t help but think, if my Dragon self was gone, maybe I would become her. If so then, what is called my present existence wouldn’t exist without her? I also don’t understand our time line. (5) I don’t know — which is the world she exists in, and within which time, does she exist before or after me, or are we coexisting. I’ll stop thinking for now. I must concentrate on what is in front of my eyes at the moment. I take a deep breath and search within my memories the sequence of events until I arrived here. Indeed, because the enemy’s state seemed unusual Madeleine and I proceeded to the frontlines together.

Good, I remember. It should be fine.

“You said something’s weird, but it looks normal to me.”

Though I'm looking from afar, on the land there are warring humans, in the skies Fire Drake are flying about, and the few sorcerers are helping out from the rear. The enemy is the same, although they don't even have Dragons. I wonder if it's for the sake of taking down the Fire Drakes, but they are going into the offensive by shooting arrows and something that looks like magic.

"Look well, their leadership is not taking command at all."

Paying attention at her words, certainly Tiruzoto's soldiers are fighting while scattered all over the place, and I feel that their numbers are fewer than I thought. Going by the present condition it can be seen clearly that Alvina is superior.

"It's odd, that that Tiruzoto would fight in this manner. Yes it's just like... They are, sacrificial pieces... — !?" (6)

— With a bang, a great vibration makes the air tremble.

My body was hit by something like a shockwave and I almost fall over, but I managed to stand firm on my legs and remained standing.

"This is, the Unicorn's...!?"

Madeleine is looking up at the sky in astonishment. When I followed her lead and looked up as well, something thin and sparkling gold was raining down on us, numbering in the dozens, hundreds, thousands. The thin lights cover everything in the vicinity and I can no longer open my eyes, so I can't confirm what they are, yet meanwhile the great vibrations and the shockwaves that made the air tremble continued to arrive, forming waves, and I stand in place with all my might although I can't even move.

Could this be, that maybe this was the Unicorns' Light magic that Timo mentioned previously. But I hadn't thought it could have such a wide range.

— What the heck is this? What's going on?

In the distance, I can hear screams and heartbreaking yells, making me afraid. I wonder what's going on, I can't understand the situation. Spouting curses while enduring these shockwaves, I wonder if Madeleine, who is by my side, is the same.

Finally the light subsides and my sight clears up.

Staring at what is in front of my eyes, I become speechless.

Just a few meters in front.

Ahead of me, had been reduced to hell.

"... No way."

Though there were so many people over there, not a single person remains standing. On the

contrary the vicinity had been dyed bright red by a sea of blood.

What came flying down together with the shockwaves were big, shining golden arrows, with the thickness of an arm. In several tens, and even several thousands, they fell on the earth without leaving a single gap uncovered, did these fall from the skies? And, as if the duty of those things was accomplished by piercing through the human bodies, they disappear like sand; only the bodies that remain on the ground after having been pierced through are claiming that those things existed. (6)

If, I had been standing further ahead than this, I might be dead. Horrified about it, my legs end up cowering.

“Madeleine, this, what does this mean...?”

Madeleine is biting her lips with a desperate look.

“... My judgment was wrong. The opposing country is serious; they are trying to end everything in this one battle.”

“That is, they are coming at us at full strength?”

“I do not know why, but that’s it. They want to “win” quickly even if they have to sacrifice their own allies.”

Why. How come. The reason why their leadership did not come forward and that there were only a handful of their troops was, in order to fire the Unicorns’ attack? It’s better if there are less sacrifices, only for that reason? What sort of people are they.

“If we don’t do something before the next attack arrives...!!”

‘I’m sorry, I’ll return first!’ Saying that, Madeleine run off. Going to meet the Prince or her Father, whichever it is, if we don’t possess a powerful magic it will be impossible to defend against the Unicorns’ attack, so at the very least Madeleine’s strength is necessary, right? Even if we decide to do a physically attack, we don’t even know where the Unicorns are. If we take a gamble on attacking a certain place where they might be, we’d first have to break through the enemy’s encampment. But that kind of thing is too unreasonable. It’s an extremely suicidal act.

In such a situation... what should be done?

I have been standing in place, dumbfounded.

Terrible. Such a terrible scene.

A considerable number of people had been done in by that attack. Allies, enemies, all of them.

As there are people for whom it’s already too late and they have already died, there are

also people who have had their limbs torn off. There are people screaming in pain, and there're also people still trying to hold their swords and fight spite being wounded. As I continued to be dumbfounded, several Fire Drakes flew past from behind me, and a new battle had started on the ground. Even though the Unicorns' attack had happened indeed, they are continuing to move forward without hesitation.

This, is war.

How cruel. How tragic.

It's not just one or two people. They die in the scale of tens, of hundreds of people.

I should have been prepared for this. But when I actually witnessed it, there is a force that ends up making me hesitate. Madeleine, I wonder why you are so strong. Because you participated in the previous war? Because you are accustomed to it? So, is that why you and Chiffon have a different air? Either way, there's no way that a girl of such an age would withstand a scene like this.

But, this kind of things is useless.

Taking a step forward, I advanced.

The viscous sensation of blood is transferred from the sole of my feet, and the smell of blood fills everything to the point of making me throw up. The surroundings are littered by dead bodies and pieces of meat, and I continue to walk as I avoid them.

I couldn't possibly have thought, that this scene looked delicious. There is no way I could think that. Rather, how comfortable I would feel if I vomited all the contents of my stomach.

As I was walking like I was in a daze, I spot a familiar figure and hurry over there.

"Vice-Captain...! Are you all right!?"

Although his Fire Drake was by his side unhurt, the Vice-Captain had suffered a terrible wound in one leg. He avoided the full extent of the shockwave by a hair's breadth it seems, but apparently he was unable to avoid it completely. The bleeding is severe, and though he is pressing down on the wound, the momentum of the blood flowing through the gaps of his hands doesn't stop. I take out from my pocket the bandage cloth I had received from Madeleine just in case something happened, and hurry to stop the bleeding by tying it around it.

"Miss Vito? ...It's dangerous here, quickly escape."

He must be also wondering why am I here. Because I didn't tell anyone. But he says that instead, seemingly more worried about my well being than about that, and more than his own well being. I stopped the bleeding but his face is ghastly pale as if devoid of blood. Thinking that this is the worst as he will collapse from anemia at this rate, ...to shake off that

idea I yell.

“I’ll go call someone over right away!”

“No, it’s fine.”

“But...!”

The Vice-Captain rises while staggering, shaking off the hand I had stretched out trying to stop him, and with an unreliable gait he straddled the Fire Drake by his side and flew away. He was holding a spear in his hands.

I wonder if he still intends to fight. We don’t know when that attack will come again, and yet he flew away.

— Are you really returning alive?

Looking at the direction in which he flew, I can see that there are some pitch black things crowded at the other side, and I became horrified.

Those are, people. And what’s more, it’s a countless number of people heading this way.

...There is no way we can win against such a large army!!

Definitely, Tiruzoto Kingdom intends to end everything in this one battle. Why do they need to rush it so much.

My head becomes dizzy and my consciousness is spontaneously — cut off with a Pzzzt.

“What’s all of this, already!!”

The inside of my head feels messy. Like my brain was stirred up inside of a food processor or a mixer, or even a washing machine. My face hurts where it remains stuck to the floor, but as I stand up while opening my eyes and shaking my head in denial, it made me feel worst.

Thinking that this is useless I slowly sit on a chair and take a deep breath.

“Ca, calm down, me. That is a dream. Yes, it’s a dream so the war and everything are just that.” (7)

If I think of it as a dream I calm down a bit.

But I wonder why, I also feel like that is not a dream. The scenes were too realistic and that smell of blood. To me who was raised as a pacifist the stimulus from those scenes was too intense. It’s also no wonder that the me within the dream was dreadfully frightened.

“But, I wonder why the me from the dream did not become a dragon.”

If she had become a Dragon, wouldn’t she have been somewhat helpful? And from there she could have flown into the enemy headquarters and search for the Unicorns who launched that powerful attack and defeat them, or if that was futile, persuade them, or it might even be possible to defeat the enemy’s leaders and leave them in chaos.

But the me within the dream will not do it.

“... As expected, because it’s scary, isn’t it.”

I know myself well. A me who won’t feel fear in a war where people kill each other doesn’t exist. Rather it’s amazing enough that decided to go over there. I can’t comprehend why, this me whose motto is to do my best to avoid troublesome things, would go so far in order to go to the front lines. Was it because there are things she wanted to protect, is something the real me can’t understand.

While I was deep in thought my mobile’s ringtone resounds. It’s an e-mail from oniichan again. Since the mental damage I received from watching a dream about a realistic war is too big I don’t have the willpower to check it out.

Now there is no energy to confirm a large psychological damage that had a dream of realistic war. I’m sure it’s an e-mail to demand a reply to the one I didn’t respond to. Do your work, oniichan.

“War, huh.”

It’s something unrelated to me who grew up in this peaceful Japan that abandoned its military might. Although I read about it in history books or novels and I’ve seen it in movies, I wonder what I would do if I experienced it first-hand. No, the answer is already set, the only choice would be to escape without thinking. It’s obvious that one’s body is the dearest there can be. It’s also natural as a human being to run away while turning one’s back to the unpleasant things. Swinging in the chair that makes a creaking sound, I look up at the ceiling with a wry smile, thinking ‘what a rotten person I am.’ Spotting a stain that looks like a cat face made me think, ‘which reminds me, Hana is?’ so I over the room but she is not here. After all since her feeding keeps on getting on hold, she might have gone down and asked my brother to feed her. I laugh with a ‘she did such a pitiful thing,’ and the moment I decide to get changed and go down, cold sweat comes out at a headache and the sandstorm that distorts my sight.

“Hey, again—!?”

If I collapse now I will fall down together with the chair. This time too I won't be given the time to do an ukemi and will fall back and hit the floor with my back. (8) Somehow I tried to stand up with the intent of collapsing onto the bed, but mercilessly, — my consciousness was cut off with a pzzzt. (9)

I was running through the battlefield looking for Madeleine.

Not caring about the matters about the daydream, right now the important thing is, only what should I do in this situation.

To become a Dragon now should be fine. I might be able to fly to the enemy headquarters and search for the Unicorns who launched that powerful attack and persuade them, or even to defeat the enemy's leaders and leave them in chaos. But... I'm afraid. I was afraid of become their target once I take on a Dragon's form. Even if a little, rumors about me have reached the other kingdom, so they will surely enter a special offensive once they see my figure. And it is impossible to confront such a large army. Sure I might be strong, but I won't win against the strategy of piling up dust to make a mountain. (10) The final result would be to receive an all-out attack.

I'm pathetic. To think I'd be so scared now that I'm at the battlefield, even though it was me myself the one who said that I wanted to come. I'm really pathetic. I'm so pathetic that it makes me laugh.

“... That is”

As I was still unable to exit the frontline, and I was running towards the battling frontline which wasn't within the scope of the Unicorns' attack, I become aware that there are several Fire Drakes present in the sky, and by spotting a familiar figure my feet come to a stop.

It was, the Fire Drake riding Captain.

He is pulling the reins of the Fire Drake, and leading skillfully while annihilating the enemy.

There're also some few other Knights, it's like their human foes are being pushed back by their Fire Drake Dragons. (11)

—Amazing.

Their overwhelming strength is breathtaking.

Above all, I couldn't remove my eyes from the Captain. The clothes of his left arm are torn from the elbow down, and his arm is covered with closely packed white scales up to the tip of his fingers. He is of course also wielding a spear, with that same hand. There's nobody amongst the enemies that could stand an attack from that foreign left arm, is there.

However, when one of the enemies' attacks grazes the Captain's Fire Drake that had been flying close to the ground, it breaks the Fire Drake's balance and it falls to the ground. And another enemy comes at him mercilessly wielding a large sword. But the Captain nimbly descends on the ground and fixing his posture he draws the twin swords he carried by his waist and fights off the attack. He doesn't have something like a shield. The sword he used to parry off the enemy's attack, was the one on his left arm. With faster movements than when I watched a practice match, the enemy is being pushed back. But the number of opponents was too many. Even if he defeats them and defeats them there's no end to it. Eventually the sword he held in his right hand is sent away, yet he switches the one in the left hand to the right hand, and uses his left arm to catch the enemies' swords and break them. And when the enemies become surprised and become full of openings he uses that left arm to pierce through their torsos. He receives a blood spray at point-blank range, but without wiping it off he decides on the next opponent, and moves agilely.

He mastered using the left arm I gave him. It could also be used like that. His left arm itself has become a sword.

— This side of the Captain which I don't know.

Even though he is always warm and fuzzy, in the him right now there's no gap, there's fighting spirit only.

In his dark pupils there's a dull glint, as he is ascertaining the enemy. He's totally like a beast hunting its prey.

Suddenly, my sight met those pupils. And when those eyes stop on my dazed figure, those pupils open up wide.

At that moment, again — the vibration that goes off with a boom.

The air trembles, and something similar to electricity runs through my whole body with a tingling feeling. I even began to hear a ringing in my ears.

I wonder, if it's that shock wave again.

— No way, because, there still are some of Tiruzoto Kingdom's soldiers here...! !

What are they really thinking? Once they throw that over here, it can be said that they'll even end up involving a large number of allies together with us. I believe that maybe they have some sort of plan and glance at them, but as they are escaping in a panic they were surely not informed of this attack from the Unicorns.

A battle you want to win even if you have to sacrifice your allies. Where's the merit in such a thing.

Although earlier I had miraculously been outside from the attack's range, this time by the magnitude of the vibration I should be within its range. Looking up at the sky, its number was fewer than before, yet doubtlessly the brilliant golden arrows that bathed in the sunlight were there.

It could be said that the danger was reaching the immediate vicinity, however, as if my feet were sown to the ground, I was just standing in place in shock, watching at them.

— Oh, will this hurt? I'm sure, it will hurt. But, my legs, won't move —

“— Vito!!”

Chapter 35

There's no time to think. My reason.

A voice is shouting my name.

Looking up at the sky, I can see that along that great vibration in the air, golden arrows are raining down. They are fewer than before, but just by standing here at least one should hit me. They are fewer than before, but just by standing here at least one should hit me. Imagining how they will go through my body, gouging out my vowels and bathing the ground with a splash of my blood, and then disappearing like sand like they were never there, I'm horror-struck.

I can feel the approaching danger of this situation with the whole of my body, however my mind has gone blank, and it's totally like I am suffering from temporary paralysis as I can't escape, I can't move even a finger; I can't do anything but stare up at that and receive the blow.

The looming arrows of light.

By remembering the bright-red scene that was burned in my mind a bit earlier, I feel dismayed.

It's hopeless already.

At this distance it's too late to do anything. Even trying to escape, even if I try to return to my Dragon form, I won't make it in time. If I were to change my skin into scales, it would still be easily penetrated by such a dangerous weapon falling down from such a height. Oh, if only I could use any type of magic at this time.

For some reason, I was calmly contemplating on how my life was going to end so abruptly. The inside of my head is cruelly clear, and I'm not really experiencing anything like my life flashing before my eyes. (1)

As this seems like self-mutilation, I made a wry smile.

And, it was at that moment.

— Tap, something pushed on my shoulder, and I collapsed backwards, falling on my back.

In that instant, a large arrow of light got stuck on the ground just by my side. Had I fallen just a bit out of this place, and I would have definitely become a victim to the arrows of light.

As I stared fixedly at the stuck arrow of light in surprise, from the surroundings I can hear the sound of the continuously falling arrows, the sound of people being pierced through, and shrieks and screams.

But more than that, the loudest sound was, the dull sound as if something was being torn apart, as if it was being pierced through, from right in front, of this fallen me.

... I can, hear a voice. It was a painful, low groaning voice.

Slowly raising my line of sight, I look up at him. That color I grew accustomed to, that single long braid was, falling on my shoulder.

“Cap, tai....n?”

I wonder, when did he come close to me. If it was him, he could have escaped aboard the Fire Drake, because, actually, the other Knight’s who were fighting had become aware of the attack, and had escaped to the rear, evading this attack.

Nevertheless, why, is the Captain here.

— What is this? Red drops of shining glitter, are drifting down. Heck, what are they.

When I became aware of the identity of the sparkles, my breath stopped for a moment, and I became terrified.

The Captain’s abdomen had been, admirably penetrated by a dazzling arrow. That arrow was the thing that was stuck beside me. In that state of being fixed to the ground, the arrow was glittering wet with blood. And, as if to say that its mission was accomplished it begins to disappear, and I hurry to use both hands to receive and support the Captain’s body which seems about to fall down. Because of the spurts of blood from the battle from earlier his bangs were stuck to his forehead, so I can see his dark pupils at point-blank range.

It was his usual kind visage, unlike the one he sported a while ago.

“I’m, glad.”

Blood overflows from his open mouth, and falls on my face. Warm, bright red blood, which just now had been wandering about through his body. Every time he coughs heavily, my cheeks and clothes become stained with bright red dense blots.

—What, is this? What happened? ...blood. A bright red, vivid hue. ... Oh, isn’t it a waste? Spilled, like this, a waste. ...Very, wasteful. —No, no... no. It’s not like that. It’s not like that. Not that kind of thing. It’s not like I want to think of such a thing. Nevertheless, I don’t know what to do.

The large, brilliant arrow that remained stuck to his abdomen, end up disappearing smoothly as sand, and as if the cork had disappeared from the gaping hole in his abdomen vivid blood pours out. Ironically, as the Captain's body loses its support and falls forward, I couldn't gather the strength to catch him; his body overlaps with mine and we flop down to the ground in that manner. His eyelids are closed, and even if I shake him, or whatever I do, those eyes can't see anymore.

Still red blood continues to wet the ground.

"ah..."

Not believing this sight, I desperately tried to somehow squeeze my voice out from my dried up throat. But, what comes out is just air, I couldn't form words. From my head my complexion grows worst, and there's a terrible buzzing in my ears. My head hurts. My body is trembling, I'm cold. But, the Captain's temperature in my arms, is even colder.

My fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault.

— My fault!!! Even though if I hadn't stood dumbfounded in a place like this, if I had been able to react to the attack when I noticed it, things wouldn't have come to this...!

What are you "glad" for? Why did you protect me? Why did you laugh, with such a happy face...? Although it was painful, though it was excruciating. So much blood is overflowing, you got a hole in your body, a way to save you, I don't have any. Even though you may end up dying, why.

I'm, such a fool. An idiot, stupid blockhead. Being protected by the person I don't wish to lose the most, behaving carelessly and being the only one without a single injury on them.

What's with this!?

I desperately press down on the wound with both hands to stop the blood, but it comes overflowing out from the gap between my fingers.

"I, don't... want this."

If this is a dream wake up...! !

Why, why, why, why, why, why, why, why.

He will die? He will end up dying? Really?

That's right, if it's Lord Cleric...! But, that person is at the castle, no matter how much effort I do to fly over there I won't make it in time! Then, maybe Madeleine, someone, ...anybody, but who. Who, could possibly help us...?

His body which is missing its vigor is heavy, and as I stare at his complexion which goes

losing its vitality, foul thoughts invade my mind.

...In that case.

If I'm about to lose him, then I better eat him here and now.

— Can you, really, do such a thing?

I mean, he will die. Then by my hands, in his last moments.

— Do you, really, want to eat him?

...I don't, want to. There's no way, I could want to eat him. But, I don't know.

Because, what should I do, I don't know.

Again, that sensation which cuts off my consciousness assaults me.

My sight and awareness become hazy, and I can no longer hear anything. If I surrender to this sensation like this, will I see that daydream again, and without waking up this time, I wonder if I can return to live that human life thinking that this all is a dream,

Such a sweet temptation.

...That's right, I should run away , and forget it all.

If losing someone is so painful, and the me who could do nothing feels only regret, if I can do nothing but watch on, I think, I should be allowed to avert my eyes from reality, right?

But, ...such a thing, — it's too convenient for me.

Then, what do I do?

— A CONTRACT —

"...Huh?"

Something resounded within my head. A voice that's not a man's nor a woman's proclaims its existence by talk to me within my head, forcibly retaining my consciousness that was about to be disconnected.

— IN THIS PL... TO PERF...M ... HE ... A CONTRACT — (2)

"Wha, what's this, ..."

I felt sick. Wondering if finally the next step from my dreams is to hear auditory hallucinations, I was greatly perplexed and frantically tried to shake it off. I don't have the time to be having these hallucinations now, yet that voice didn't stop speaking to me at all.

— A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT —

— A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT, A CONTRACT —

Repeating these words. A certain word that I've heard repeatedly. It echoes many, many times, many dozens of times, many hundreds of times, like it is trying to brainwash me.

What has become of my head? It's painful.

— "Even so, I think it's good for you to know this." (3)

This time, Lord Cleric's words suddenly echo within my head.

Like a drop of clear water forming a ripple within the turbid, muddy chaos, they spread gently to every corner of my mind.

At the same time that voice that was making noise up till now disappears, and all of a sudden I feel at ease as if I was set free.

"The, contract's ...method."

I don't know what's happening to me, but I feel like, I have perceived a single light of hope.

Did perchance Lord Cleric know that things would turn out this way, and thus he taught me that back then? Because he had done his so-called reading of the future, so he somehow had the need to teach it to me.

What a person.

Irritating, and hateful.

If you knew this was gonna happen then I'd certainly have been glad if you had told me that instead. Because maybe then things wouldn't have come to this!

But, ...those things don't matter now. Even if I curse Lord Cleric time won't turn back.

If it can save the Captain, anything will do.

I mean, I don't want to lose him.

I don't want him to die.

Let alone covering for me then dying? What's with that. This is not an exaggerated legend! I don't have a need for that!

I, I don't want to lose him...! I won't let him die, definitely...!

That time, I swore, that no matter what happens, no matter how many times he faces danger, I definitely won't let him die. If these feeling I have for him are what is called love, I'll resign myself to accept it. But, he's someone dear to me to the point, that the words 'I like you,' 'I love you,' 'you're precious to me,' are not enough to convey it.

I absolutely, don't want him to die. So.

— I ask you, please, don't die.

For that sake, I have the resolution to do anything.

Chapter 36 – Part 1

The pledge, and the black color. The illusion, and the determination.

“Captain, I’m sorry.”

I place my trembling hand on his cold cheek.

For what I’m trying to do now, I won’t ask you to forgive me. I mean, I can only think of this method.

... I always avoided thinking about it. About if perhaps, the Captain could become my partner. When I asked about it to the person himself I received nothing more than an ambiguous reply. I was happy that he was the only one to say he didn’t have expectations of me as the Sacred Beast – Earth Dragon. So, I was always thinking, that there was no way I’d ever form a contract or the like.

... However those thoughts were my obstinacy.

But, now’s not the time to be crawling over such a stupid pride.

I bite down on my own wrist with resolution. I didn’t tear the blood vessel properly so I bite strongly again and now blood runs down like it should. It’s very painful. It hurts, but when compared to the Captain’s wound then this is nothing. As I take into my mouth the blood that overflowed, it tastes of actual iron to me, unlike human blood.

Filling my mouth with it, I hug the Captain’s head. I gently brush his bangs and stroke his cheek. His body temperature has become so cold I feel dread, and makes me want to cry.

In fact, I may be crying.

—...I’m sorry.

Softly, I approach his face.

From up close his pale face devoid of any blood, just like a doll’s, has its eyelids closed, and they don’t move; they don’t even make any slight movement. Becoming scared I end up hesitating but, never mind, I neatly overlap our lips. I poured out the blood that was within my mouth. It ends up intermingling with the blood that is pouring from his mouth. But it’s fine. Because there is meaning in our bloods getting mixed together like this.

Detaching my lips, this time I pressed my arm which was dripping blood to the open hole in his abdomen. In short, this blood is the medium. It’s important that a part of me, whatever its form, enters his body and intermingles with him. (1)

And lastly, it’s my will. (2) I opened my mouth, feeling it heavy.

“— The ‘*Covenant of blood*’”

My voice was so chafed; even I thought I sounded miserable.

Just with this, with such a cheap-looking line which Lord Cleric taught me, will it really be established? Driven by anxiety and feeling disheartened, I just continued to pray. 'Please.'

After a while, a watery geometric pattern emerges shining from his forehead towards his left cheek. Lord Cleric said this is what is called the proof of the contract, thus as the Earth Dragon's body changes color, in the same manner that proof will appear in some part of the human's body. It's black, and looks like a tattoo, and together with it a hazy pale light envelops the Captain's body. Though there's no wind, his hair and clothes are swaying. And conspicuously the wound in his abdomen emits light, and by the time it disperses the wound had healed as if there was never a wound from the beginning.

Only, his complexion was still bad, probably from losing large amounts of blood.

"...This, what kind of miracle is it."

Since it worked out excessively well, laughter builds up in me. I'm surely laughing with a cramped up face.

— "The contractor's body can be reconstructed once. So any illness or injury can be healed."

Ah, as I thought Lord Cleric knew of this so he taught me the procedures of the contract. If I can return then I'll absolutely hit him. It doesn't matter if he has a pretty face. I'll punch him with my fists to my heart's content.

When the pale light that had wrapped him up disperses, his eyelids open and the eyes of my beloved black color reflect my figure. And his lips wet with blood form my name.

"I'm sorry."

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry for doing something selfish. But the present me, couldn't think of another method to save him other than this.

When I had apologized many times, he stretched his arms towards me.

"Don't, cry..."

He gently wiped the tears that came to my eyes.

At that instant, I noticed for the first time that I was crying. My sight was a little distorted, and the tears that fell every time I blinked fell on his cheek. When my face is touched by his hands, not cold, but containing warmth, happiness wells up in me, and from the bottom of my heart something gentle and warm and comes bubbling up.

I'm so happy at the fact that he's alive. I'm happy, so happy, sobs are about to escape from my mouth.

But I can't stay here crying.

I wipe the tears roughly with my sleeve.

"...I will accept any curses or punches you throw my way." (3)

Since I did something selfish, I won't make any excuses or pretexts, nor will I run away.

"But, please wait a little bit. There's something I must do."

I flashed a gentle grin towards him who looked like he wanted to say something, and stood up.

My body, is very hot.

As the blood passes through my blood vessels as if it was boiling, my whole body becomes hot, I can tell that my cells are changing. My body is surrounded by light, and from a human's figure I become a Dragon. But even though I'm confused at the strange sensation, at this something that surges forward from the depths of my chest, my heart is at ease.

It was the first time, I held this sensation.

By the time the lights disappeared and my field of vision cleared up, I noticed that my appearance was a little bit different.

My arms, my legs, my torso, my wings that flutter at the edge of my vision, as well as my tail.

Just slightly different.

Something's different.

That is.

It's magnificent.

— It is black.

It was my beloved black.

Each of my scales emits a glitter when reflecting the light of the sun.

It's not the dull color of darkness nor an ink black, it's a jet-black color filled with light, up to the point of being divine.

The color which I couldn't reach with my hands is dwelling in my body. My chest beats fast because of the elation and nostalgia.

"Vito, come back... without fail."

As he was making a worried face I stare fixedly at his pupils.

And spreading my jet-black wings, I flew away.

Translator's Lair~

(1) *Maybe (forsomemagicalreason), she couldn't use the horn she had already given him and had to place her own blood into his body. @[superdbgtfan](#) also adds that it also may be because she simply forgot about the horn.*

(2) *yay! A word with so many meanings and little context! I love these. *sarcasm* She says, 'and lastly, my "omoi"'. Wtf did she mean, I went with "will" because it flows a bit better though it's not the best word choice, but here are the other meanings. Take your pick: 思い【おもい】(n) thought; mind; heart; feelings; emotion; sentiment; love; affection; desire; wish; hope; expectation; imagination; experience; (P).*

(3) *that's more or less what she meant. The sentence itself, says: "...I'll accept any abuse or violence." 「・・・どんな罵倒も暴力も受け取ります?」*

Chapter 36 – Part 2

It would be nice to go rampaging in rage.

But my head was frozen over. What is the most efficient action to take, or what to do to annihilate the enemy, that's all I can think about.

Up until now, I have mercilessly attacked enemies which had been running wildly, spitting a breath which holds ten times, hundreds of times of the might of fire, crushing, biting, slicing them with my wings and tail, and making a roar that resounds in the sky several times. (1)

Not fearing the threat that is the suddenly appeared me, there were many people who were striving to flee. (2) There were also those who boldly came to challenge me. The people from Alvina Kingdom were bewildered upon seeing an Earth Dragon which wielded black, although I also felt that their morale was gradually rising.

Someone who could stop me, there wasn't anyone.

Kill one person and it becomes a sin, kill many people and you become a hero. Someone said this once. It might, not necessarily be a mistake. By making so many sacrifices, there's no one who could remain sane, so there's no way to accept it other than to revere a hero and justify these deeds. But, I don't have in me such regret and guilt. The human me who feels such things, ended up recessing to the back. (3)

Doing the contract that I said I hated to that extent, annihilating a large number of humans. Even if this is what Lord Cleric and the voice that echoed within my head's prediction, I don't care about that, this is what I have decided on my own.

While it's strange, I'm calm.

I have already decided on my resolution.

— If that is the case, won't you end up sticking to Alvina Kingdom until the end?

When I laugh in a pleasant manner my pointy fangs drenched in blood appear, and I let out a warped smile.

It's funny, so funny, I can't help it.

But no matter how many enemies I confront, their number is not reduced and this has no end. As expected it seems a great power as Tiruzoto Kingdom can't be dealt with by ordinary means.

To stop this war, even temporarily, somehow or other I must act on the enemy general. (4) And attack of the Unicorns hasn't reached us once since then. Since the second attack was on a smaller scale, it's possible that it has a considerable consumption of physical strength.

Then if I'm going to act on them I have no choice but to do it now, I think as I fly high in the sky, aiming towards Tiruzoto Kingdom's command headquarter. Occasionally things such as arrows and magic come rushing towards me, but to me those are small attacks on the level of lightly brushing me.

I won't fear anymore.

As if I had the time to be minding such things, first I have to think about what to do now. (4)

As I fly, I discover something like a big camp, without even hesitating I approach it while increasing my speed and descend while nearing a conspicuously big tent. A fuzz starts at my sudden appearance, the surroundings fall in a confusion state. Although I've received more attacks until now, they don't hurt nor do they itch. My black scales can't be ripped apart by such a thing.

"Your Majesty! Please escape!"

Hearing that voice in front and turning in that direction, I discovered would be the one who evidently is the most prominent character. This man should be the number one important person of Tiruzoto Kingdom if he is being called Majesty.

Short hair of dark, purplish blue, and golden pupils. He looks younger than I thought. He has a plainer image compared to Prince LeBlanche, but as for his pupils which carry a radiance not unlike an Unicorn's, I feel that a deep darkness burns within them. Possessing a sharp glint, they are eyes so sharp that they seem capable of killing with just a glare.

I have only one image of royals inside me, I thought they were humans worthy of being tyrants who show off their power. He's not a wise ruler, caring of his country, nor a popular friendly person like the Prince. His tight air gives off a bad vibe and is within the kinds of people you absolutely don't want to approach. (4.5) But now's not the time to be hesitant.

As if I was talking directly to his brain I bumped my thoughts into him.

[Are you the King of Tiruzoto Kingdom?] (5)

When I addressed him, he made a surprised look for a moment but immediately reverted to being expressionless. I felt eeriness from his countenance which displayed the quality of possessing an air of composure. (6)

The enemy soldiers that surrounded me say were holding their weapons and were set to charge at me at any moment, however a strange silence was drifting about.

He hasn't answered anything to my question and is just standing tock still. Being positive that I had reached him I continued.

[Please withdraw your troops. Otherwise I'll wipe out each of you with fire right here. This is a warning.]

It might also be possible to end this by the mean of killing this man. But it's no good to just use force. Nothing will be solved by simply inviting chaos.

The man was looking up at me expressionlessly.

[I'll say it again. There won't be a second time. Now, please withdraw your troops.]

My words appear to have been heard by everyone around us, as a man who looked like a servant by his side yells, 'How rude!' and raises his bow, attempting to release an arrow at me.

However the man across my eyes stopped him with his hand.

"...All right."

He walks a few steps and comes up in front of me. It's a distance at which I can bite his head if I stretch my neck a little.

"Your Majesty!?"

"You fall back."

"Ho, however...!!"

"I am telling you to fall back."

At being glared at the servant man fell back grudgingly. His face was as pale as though he was a frog being stared down by a snake.

The man looked up at me ominously, and laughs with a wide grin.

"This time, I'll retreat out of consideration to you. I didn't think, you'd come marching here by yourself. Besides it seems that because of such a great power unintentionally we also ended up bearing a considerable serious damage. " (7)

'I didn't think you'd overwork the Unicorns this much.' (8) Such angry words ended up gushing forth. I confirmed that they are being exploited.

"That power is something that was undeniably offered up to us. One day... We will show you we will obtain you too."

[I'm no one's possession.]

At the growl I give his smile becomes even deeper, and his eyes of golden color narrow.

"I wonder if that's true? From the moment in which you formed a contract you became your contractor's possession. Then, We will obtain the both of you."

What a Gianizm.(9) He's so self-centered he's even more selfish than me. I don't even want

to think about how such a person can be the ruler of a kingdom. I do not want to not talk to this man. I spread my wings and raise some wind in order to fly away from this place.

[Withdraw. That's all I will tell you.]

When the last to speak much, fly into the sky to float the body in the air.

"Let's meet again. Oh Black Earth Dragon which harbors the taboo colour in its body."

I could hear his eerie laughter from above the ground.

—————

Translator's Lair~

The notes are strong in this one!

(1) wild guess! This whole sentence has things I'm unsure about~ XD well, the general meaning is there though. 逃げ惑う敵に容赦なく襲い掛かり、今までの数十倍、数百倍の威力のある火を吐いて、潰して、噛んで、翼や尾で薙ぎ払い、何度も空に向かって咆哮を轟かせた。

(2) people fleeing: why are they fleeing if they don't fear her? Maybe a mistake? Oh well. Here's the sentence:

突然現れた私と言う脅威に恐れをなし、我先にと逃げ去っていくものはたくさんいた。

(3) recede down? Recede back? Sink down? 'oku ni hikkonde shimatteiru.'奥に引っ込んでしまっている。

(4) wild guess~ そんなものに臆している暇なんてあるのなら、今をどうするか考えるのが先だ。

(4.5) tight – it's a long explanation, reduced it to tight xD "to blindstitch the inside of a fold with (equally spaced) threadings (i.e. pulling shoe lacing tight). まつっている

(5) she says, are you the majesty of tiruzoto K. and that sounds odd in English xD Majesty = heika (陛下)

(6) –taru: to show/reveal/display the requirements or qualifications. —たる weblio in jp.

(7) the serious damage and the large power, I think he refers to the unicorns' power and attacks which damaged even their side, not vito's charge at them, but I'm not sure. By the way, it was never confirmed how many unicorns were on scene, whether it was one or many.

(8) guess what... wild guess!! XDユニコーンも思ったより働いてはくれなかったしな

(9) Gianizm – o.o no idea what this is. Apparently, it's a doctrine by a guy named Gian, and an album by Nightmare xD.

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Translated by [Dragonmt](#)*
